LIFE OF
BARRISTER
SAVARKAR
BY
CHITRA GUPTA

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

In order to satisfy, however partially, the curiosity so widely felt throughout India to know something of the life and work of the famons patriot Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the publishers have ventured to bring out this short sketch, chiefly based on the reminiscences of many a contemporary of Mr. Savarkar, the recorded trials, and the Rowlatt Report. As Mr. Savarkar does not think it wise to write an auto-biographical sketch in the trying circumstances he has yet to live under and as a full record of revolutionary activities, such as he was engaged in, cannot, from their very nature, come to light as long as they form a part of and have a bearing on current politics, we thought it better not to wait any longer for fuller information, or for a connected story of Mr. Savarkar's life, however fascinating that be, and so have jotted down whatever scraps of information we could gather in a more or less connected form and brought them out in this booklet. There are sketches of Mr. Savarkar's life in Marathi and Hindi, and a Gujarathi Magazine had published a serial one too. The Marathi one has run into editions. But still the demand for knowing all available details about the Savarkar brothers is ever on the increase.

We want to make it quite clear at the very outset that the mere fact of recording the events, or reporting the speeches, or studying the moods of a great man in the spirit in which they originated or were wrought, may not show that they are shared by the narrator in all their bearings. So far as the revolutionary methods and means which Mr. Savarkar advocated in his youth are concerned, even he does not countenance them under changed conditions. However regrettable it be, one thing is certain, that things regrettable, and even foolish in the past, must be known and studied, for they have a historical value ; and rightly does Mr. N. C. Kelkar, the well-known Maratha leader, observe : "Although I never happened to see Mr. Savarkar and came in personal contact with him before his release, yet his fame had reached

me long ago. I am one of those who admire his heroic spirit in spite of my politically differing from his views. His patriotism was of the Irish type. When we do not hesitate to admire the daring and patriotism of persons belonging to foreign nations, it becomes simply disgraceful to fail or fear to appreciate the patriotic fervour of the sons of our own motherland. The late Mr. Gokhale stronly deprecated the unconstitutional activities of Mr. Savarkar, but I have personally heard him express admiration for many a heroic quality that Mr. Savarkar possessed. One of his intimate friends assured me sometime ago that Mr. Savarkar was a great believer in responsive co-operation and would be the first to join the rank of constitutionalists as soon as a real constitution made it possible for him to do so. He would gladly enter even the present Councils and try to see if the Reforms could be successfully worked out so as to pave the way to further political progress. We have several examples of gentlemen in Europe who, being once leaders of revolutions, became enthusiastic constitutionalists as soon as they found it more conducive to public welfare. Witness the example of the famous revolutionist, Sir Charles Gowen Jaffy, who was condemned to be executed for waging war and yet lived to be the Prime Minister of Australia. The more illustrious example is that of Garibaldi who too having revolted was sentenced to death, yet escaping remained to be the liberator of Italy, conquered Sicily and Naples and had the honour of handing them over to the King of Piedmont. The king and the culprit who was to be hanged for having taken up arms against the kingdom—Victor Emmanuel and Garidbaldi—both drove together in the Royal conveyance amongst the cheering multitudes of a loving people. Referring to such strange vicisisitudes of a life, William Absien, the famous Irish leader, writes 'The ingenuity which had formerly to be employed to shake off the nightmare in the dark grey coats and rifles has now only to be applied to the more innocent, if more difficult, task of evading "the little addresses" and the "few words" with which popular hospitality will insist upon enlivening the road. At the age of 80, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji exclaimed. "Had I been young I would have risen in arms ! " Mr. Savarkar, having revolted in his young days, may find

himself "the Minister of the Indian Government in the latter part of his life." But one thing is certain. The young generation in India will not find Mr. Savarkar's being a minister so romantic an event as the heroic dash displayed by him, while he was being escorted to India as a captive. You can have ministers in dozens, but few and far between are they who got the opportunity of recklessly endangering their lives for an ideal and yet fewer they who, getting the opportunity, actually dare to risk it in an epic spirit. The Government wants to appropriate to themselves the credit of introducing India into the League of Nations at the close of the war. But having jumped out of a port-hole, shaken the fetters that bound him, swam across the sea, scaled the dock walls, touched France and invoked the aid of International law, when Mr. Savarkar called upon the nations of the world to declare if the action of the British Government in re-arresting on the French soil an Indian whose offence consisted in rising in arms against the British occupation of his country and was therefore political, was legitimate—it was in fact on that day that Mr. Savarkar introduced India into the world polity and enabled her cause to be an international issue, some five years before the war broke out."

Mr. M. R. Jaykar, too, in a speech in Bombay, paid a glowing compliment to the services rendered by Mr. Savarkar to the nationalist cause and observed : "It is said in honouring Savarkar we honour sacrifice and patriotism. We can point out a few individuals who possess these qualities, but Barrister Savarkar possessed the integrity and courage which cannot be found. He worked for complete Independence, which is the feeling of many today at a time when the country was not even prepared to think of it. It is all very easy for us to go to the Councils to-day and oppose the Government but it was so dangerous and difficult then. At such a juncture he worked in his own way and showed that great power which is so rare."

Lala Lajpat Rai, Surendranath Banerji not to mention the great Tilak—almost all our national fathers have spoken in the most loving and admiring terms of the heroic qualities that this patriot possesses in spite of keen political differences they had with him as regards methods and means. But

the limitations that we have set to ourselves as regards this popular sketch do not allow us to quote them all here.

As we have stated above, we have only got together a few fragments of information as to Savarkar's former activities. But he who likes to know something of his views will do well to read his own books, some of them proscribed and confiscated, but others still available: for example, the *Hindutva* and *The Echo from the Andamans* and *Hindu-pad padashahi.*—now available from us that will reveal to the reader the man and his views on several questions that are now agitating the public mind.

We have brought the sketch down to the trial which ended in Mr. Savarkar's conviction and his transportation to the Andamans for life. His experiences in the Andamans which form as stirring and absorbing in their reading as the account of his activities in London, are being serially published in the " Kesari " of Poona and, if encouraged by the public in this our present undertaking, we may one day publish it as a sequel to this sketch.



SAVARKAR
(18TH YEAR.)



BARRISTER SAVARKAR
(AT HIS 24TH YEAR.)

Life of Barrister Savarkar

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH

Oh hush Thee my baby the time soon will come
When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and drum
Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you may,
For strife comes with manhood and waking with day.

Scott

SHRAJUT DAMODARPANT SAVARKAR, the father of the distinguished patriot whose life we mean to sketch here was a cultured gentleman, belonging to the chitpavan section of the Maratha Brahmins. It is this section that has long been the eyesore of the English Imperialists of Curzon type for the peculiar guilt that attaches to it of producing men in an unbroken succession for the last two hundred years or so who ever constituted the vanguard of the Indian forces in the struggle of Indian freedom. The first Peshwa, Balaji Vishwanath, was a chitpavan. Bajirao, who was one of the foremost generals India ever produced, was a chitpavan ; the hero of Panipat was a chitpavan ; Nana Fadnavis the great Indian Statesman, Nana saheb who rose in the national rising of 1857, Vasudeo Balwant who revolted against the British Government and aimed to achieve Indian Independence, the Chapheker brothers and Ranade who were

hanged as murderers for killing the British officers responsible for the Plague administration in Poona, were all chitpavans. Shrijut Gokhale, Justice Ranade and the Great Tilak all these were chitpavans. No wonder then that destiny should have chosen this particular caste to bring forth and nestle the child which was to be, to quote Valentine Chirol, one of the most brilliant of modern Indian revolutionalists. For it was amongst these chitpavans that Vinayakrao Savarkar was born in 1883 A. D. Damodarpant had three sons; Ganesh was the eldest, Vinayak was his second son and Narayan was the youngest of the three. These three together were to form the famous "Savarkar Brothers," whose activities and sufferings continue to exercise such facinating an influence on the minds of Indian youths.

Vinayak ever since his childhood was given to lofty aspirations and was marked out by all those who came in contact with him as an exceptionally gifted child. He owed his patriotic and poetical inclinations to his father who used to recite to him epic stories from Mahabharat and Ramayan and the old Bhakars and ballads that sing of the exploits of Pratap and Shivaji and Bhau. Homer too was a great favourite with his father and Vinayak loved to listen to the spirited verses of Pope's Iliad and the translated stories of Agamemnon and Achelles at his father's feet. His father was himself a poet and used to make his young son recite long and beautiful passages from the marathi poets

such as Vaman and Moropant and Tukaram. This early acquaintance with marathi poetry roused in Vinayak remarkable poetical faculties. He began to compose marathi verses when but ten years old. Well-known papers in Poona began to acccpt his contributions, both prose and poetical, when he was twelve, hardly realising that the writer of them was but a boy of such tender years.

There was an old dirty shelf in one of the neglected corners of the house. On it were thrown pell-mell a number of magazines containing translations of Mahabharat—several copies out of the files of the famous "Kesari" of Tilak, a well-bound volume of Nibandhamala of Chiplunker—the first of the maratha nationalists, one or two Bhakars chronicling the exploits of the Marathas in their Imperial days. These formed his mental food. He was often found absorbed in ransacking, studying and pouring over these files and pages and pathetically inducing his young schoolmates to come and share his intellectual and emotional joys. He got so devoted to these high themes that even his plays and sports were fashioned out of some old events and heroic incidents out of the maratha history or the annals of Rajasthan. Amongst his schoolmates he soon came to be known as a scholar and a patriot and a fiery orator who always talked of great deeds and great schemes of India and independence and how he meant to acheive it all and many other things far beyond their comprehension.

In 1893 to 1895 a wave of fanaticism passed all over India. Communal riots between Hindus and Moslems were the order of the day. Soon the malady infected Maharashtra too and woeful tales of Moslem outrages of the usual inhuman type inflamed the Hindu element all over the land. Young Vinayak was a great reader of the few newspapers he could lay hand on in his native village Bhagoor. The stirring descriptions and the head lines that related about the great riots at Bombay, Poona, Yeola and several other places fired the blood of young Vinayak. He could not rest without wreaking some vengeance or other on the Moslems for the outrages they had inflicted on his co-religionists in Bombay and other places in India. He summoned a council of urgency of his young schoolmates—all within 15 years of age. They decided to avenge the racial insults by—by—by, of course they could not decide exactly by what means. But why not attack that mosque that lay solitary in the vicinity of the village in retaliation of the destruction of the temples in Bombay? It was voted for. True to Shivaji's tactics the Maratha forces, not numbering more than 12 boys of some 14 years of age, advanced stealthily but unfortunately met no foes. Was it because the mosque was a deserted and dilapidated structure scarcely visited by any one at that hour—or was it out of fear that the foe fled away before he dared even to discern us? Anyway all that we have now to do is to take possession of the mosque, enjoy our occupation for a while, to

romp and dig and turn up a plod or two, or pull down a peg here and a nail there and—to take to our heels before any of the foes scented it all !—cowardice ? Rot !—even Shivaji used to take to his heels when necessary.

That was all duly done. But the foe did scent it all. A dozen Muhammedan boys consequently challenged the Hindu forces the next week. In the pretty little verandah of the village school in Bhagoor, a great pitched battle was fought between the contending forces but as the Muslims had forgot in the heat of action to carry about their persons such deadly weapons as pins, thorns, pen knives and as the Hindu Commander, our young Vinayak had wisely equipped his army in all these particulars, the Muslim boys got soon routed and could find no shelter till they reached the classrooms where the schoolmaster's austere look chilled all communal enthusiasm within a minute or two. Still a tall bony street Arab amongst the Moslem boys vowed to subject Vinayak to forcible conversion to Islam by the approved method of thrusting a piece of fried fish in his Brahmanic mouth. But fortunately he forgot the vow even quicker thȁn he used to forget his daily lessons and that put an end to this formidable war.

Nevertheless the lessons it taught were in no way negligible. Vinayak had observed with a general's regret how some of his young comrades had slipped out by the backdoor at the time of the general rally and how some youngsters fancied they

heard their mothers call, just when the attacking party advanced. When the campaign was over Vinayak remonstrated with his comrades and exhorted them to avoid any such shirking in future. He invented a play in which they could all be trained to discipline, military promptness and deligence. It was a kind of mock fight tactics in which one party of the lads personated English men or Muslims and the other the Hindu forces. It was of course found very difficult to persuade the lads to play the part of the Aliens. Similarly it was always a foregone conclusion that the fight was bound to result in a triumph for the Hindus—if not always through their pluck then at least for the simple reason that those who took the Hindu side must be patriotically permitted to win by us who personated the Aliens!

Vinayak was entrusted by his father with offering the customary daily worship to the household Gods. There was an imposing and beautifully wrought brass image of Durga round whom centred a lot of wonderful family traditions and myths. To the lad it formed a living source of inspiration. He had read that Durga was the patronising deity of Shivaji. At her feet he would sit for hours and hours, at times so completely lost in communion as to loose all outward consciousness. To her he would relate as to a mother all his boyish hopes and regrets, invoke her assistance in his dreamy schemes of waging terrible wars for the liberation of his land and his race. The recital of the *sapta shati* and especially the facinating verses that

identify the Goddess with the various forces and aspects of Nature, in the days of Navaratra festival, held him spell bound. He himself began a work in praise of Durga and composed hundreds of couplets which considering his age were of no mean literary value.

Vinayak had lost his mother when he was some ten years old. But his father shouldered up the burden of bringing up his three little sons and one daughter so dutifully and affectionately, that refusing to marry again, he personally discharged all household duties down to cooking and tending the motherless children and soon made them forget that they had ever lost a mother. But apart from all that Vinayak especially never missed his mother; for to him the image of Durga had grown into a living and loving and as real a mother as any incorporated human being could be. To Her as we said he would repair in all anxious moments, relate his young cares and worries and many a time felt he experienced a miraculous help at her hand even as he had read in the Bhaktivijaya and other stories narrated of our devotees and saints.

The year 1897 found Maharashtra in the throes of an intense political agitation and awakenings. The remarkable sessions of the national Congress at Poona, the social Conference controversy that furiously raged round it, the Shivaji celebrations and the Ganapati festivals, had all roused and worked up the Maratha people as never before. Poona became, to quote official language,

'the hot bed of sedition', all India was slowly getting infected by it. Vinayak, now about 14, lived and breathed and had his being in this tense political atmosphere. Every throb of public life in Poona found a response in his young heart. Daily he waited for news at the village post and as soon as the Poona papers arrived, devoured their contents and hastened to explain and discuss the latest news not only with his comrades and schoolmates but even with his schoolmasters and elders. For, he had even so early as that impressed men round him as one who spoke words of wisdom far above his age and whom men instinctively liked to listen to. Just then came the most sensational news that the Indian public had ever heard since the rising of Vasudeo Balvant Phadke. The English Officers responsible for the most unpopular administration in the plague-days in Poona were most daringly assassinated on the very day when all India was supposed to be rejoicing over the auspicious event of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria—The Good. The Government suspected a wide spread conspiracy 'behind the event which was so deliberately planned just to spite the loyal celebrations of the Diamond Jubilee. Arrests and rumours of arrests became the order of the day. The Natu brothers were deported; Mr. Tilak arrested, accused and sentenced; the Chapheker Brothers, betrayed by the Dravids, convicted and sentenced to be executed for the assassination of the Plague Officers. Consequently the Dravids

too were assassinated by the youngest of the Chaphekers and Ranade : Each of these stirring news came like a bombshell on the public in quick succession. A party condemned the Chaphekers as dastardly murderers, another not less numerous nor less influential but more reserved hailed them in secret as martyrs. Young Vinayak was one of them.

At last came the culminating news that the Chaphekers and Ranade were executed in Yeravada. On the day of their execution they got up early, prayed long and reciting loudly the verses of the Bhagvat Gita mounted the scaffold.

This extraordinary fortitude and the pathos of it all moved Vinayak as nothing else in his life did. He read it all with weeping eyes. He thought : well there, the Chaphekers are gone. They died full of youth and hope. They sacrificed their life, their families, and all that they held dear in this world on the altar of Motherland : and shall I— should live only to eat and drink and be merry ! Their work is unfinished, their most cherished desire unfulfilled : Why should not I take up the vow of trying my level best and sacrificing my dearest and nearest and my life and my all to fulfil their mission ? I will do it or die in the attempt !

The young boy repaired to the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of his family where the image of Durga was daily being worshiped. He sat at her feet, invoked

Her assistance in his sublime venture and in verses extempore exhorted Her to bless the cause of Indian Independence even as she blessed it in the days of Shivaji.

Then he solemnly stood up and took the vow of dedicating his life and if need be his death to the mission of liberating India from the fetters that held Her in bondage. He would carry forth the torch of his fiery resolve and set the youth of India aflame! He would organise a secret society, arm and equip his countrymen and fight out the grand struggle and if need be to die sword in hand in Her cause.

Childish! wordly wise men would naturally say. Yes, but to the child it was as grim a reality as this world which to the cynic is but rank delusion, is to the matter of fact and worldly wise men. The image of Durga stood there, he thought, smiling, parental, witnessing his high resolve: The place was suffused in incense; He felt his whole being exalted under the influence of that scene. No single event in his life left such an abiding influence on his whole career.

For it was in that fierce resolve of that youth and the vow of dedication which he administered to himself that the secret society of Abhinava Bharat which, later on, was destined to be a force to be counted within Indian politics, was really born.

Since that day the boy began a systematic propaganda to spread the mission of his life as he then conceived it. He gathered round him the pick of his schoolmates, administered to them the vow he took and introduced Shivaji and Ganapati festivals in the village. His own constant theme was the political liberation of India. To stir up the people round him he thought of composing a ballad in praise of the Chaphekers. One night his father happened to watch him sitting late by the lamp, poring over a piece of paper, his bright young eyes sparkling with tears as he kept humming some lines and jotting down others. His father approached him but the lad was too absorbed to notice him. At last Damodar Pant lovingly tapped the lad, took up the paper and to his dismay found a spirited ode in praise of the Chaphekers being written on it. Somehow Damodar Pant got alarmed, for in those days even the mention of the Chaphekers was ground enough to bring one under Police surveillance. He knew that if the poem was discovered the tender age of the lad could not be an excuse to shield him from the wrath of the powers that be. He himself was a strong Tilakait and it was his constant discussions and reading of the burning political questions of the day that had instilled the first patriotic lessons in the mind of his young son. Still the fiery ballad which the lad had composed was too serious a thing to be encouraged. Anxious as to the dangerous turn that his young son's life was likely to take if allowed long to feed itself on

such revolutionary thoughts unchecked, Damodar Pant with a father's solicitude pressed, "Child, thou art still too young. These serious cogitations would tax thy tender brain with unwholesome strain. Go take to some lighter and gayer moods and songs. When thou comest to manhood thou will be more able to fashion ways and means to render thy mission fruitful. Haste and premature and merly emotional activities such as these will only bring thyself and thy family into untold troubles."

This discouragement at the hands of his father only drove that boy deeper and made him carry his designs all the more secretly. He thenceforth continued to compose the unfinished ballad in the small hours of the night when all lay asleep. When finished he recited it to his colleagues who simply refused to believe that it could have been composed by him. Even those who listened to him reciting this spirited narration of the deeds of the Chaphekers later on in his College days remember down to this day how the recital sent a thrill through their being and now moved them to pathetic tears and then fired them to heroic resolves.

The harrowing sufferings of the people who between the Plague and the Police found themselves literally between the devil and the deep sea, as described by this boy in his ballad were only too true. Death went knocking from door to door. The Police followed death. They presented themselves

at the door as soon as death had done its work. To disinfect the house all furniture was thrown topsy turvey. The owner was turned out of the house and sun or shower was made to live out of the town in segregation huts or, still worse, left to improvise for himself some wretched cottage. Sufferings of the poor had no end. They died in thousands, some through mere shock and terror of the Plague and its consequent torturing experiences.

This terrible tale of woes which the lad had recited in his ballads was soon to be acted out in his family. For at last plague broke out in that little village and left it nearly desolated. Amongst its first victims was Damodar Pant the father of the lad. His three sons and one daughter all within thirteen were left orphans, motherless and fatherless, called upon to face the rigours of the Plague administration, which even while the dead-body of their father lay in the house served a notice on them to quit the dwelling and hand it over to the disinfecting party. The lads with a dying uncle removed to a delapidated temple in the vicinity of the village. To complete their misfortune their youngest brother too had caught the contagion and lay in such a dangerous condition that twice he was given up for dead. There in that deserted temple the two young boys Ganesh and Vinayak with the young brave wife of the former sat watching through deadly nights the two dying patients—their uncle and their youngest brother, with no one to keep them company in those horrible hours but a

solitary stray dog! At last the uncle succumbed to the Plague. The fierce contagion hourly threatened the lives of the survivers too.

In this helpless hour a schoolmate of Ganesh who lived at Nasik proved by being a friend in need a friend indeed. Shriyut Datar invited them to his house in Nasik and offered every help he would to mitigate their sufferings. Accordingly Ganesh took his two brothers and his young wife to Nasik. There keeping Vinayak and his young wife in the city he took his youngest brother to the Plague Hospital and himself remained there to attend on him. The City of Nasik too was not free from plague. It was nearly deserted. In the dark hours of the night it assumed ghostly appearance. Young Vinayak often trembled with strange fear while passing through long and deserted roads to the Plague Hospital in the dark on his usual visits to his brothers in order to take to them their daily meals and clothes, as some funeral party or the other crossed him chanting or shouting melancholy dirges and the dreadful Ram bolo Bhai Ram! To try the courage and tenacity of the boy yet further a still more unbearable anxiety faced him soon. One day he took the meals to his brothers to the Hospital and stood at the door waiting for the usual dear welcome of his eldest brother. He waited and waited but his brother failed to turn up that day. Extremely anxious he inquired as to its cause trembling to hear the worst of his fears confirmed. His eldest brother, who

had been attending his youngest one in the Hospital had himself caught the cantagion and was down with plague. The tender-hearted lad somehow managed to control himself, bore the shock, made the necessary arrangements for the nursing of his two brothers and as soon as he came home retired to a private corner and burst into tears. The only comrade who shared his grief and helplessness in this world was that brave girl—his young sister-in-law.

But these two together passed the fiery ordeal. Fortunately for them both the brothers Ganesh and Narayan ultimately recovered and returned home. Once more the Savarkar's found themselves united in a happy home rendered exceptionally blessed by the deep attachment and love they bore to each other.

But even this dire domestic calamity which had tried the mettle of young Vinayak in the days just referred to could not make him desist from or forget his political mission. Even while his brothers were lying dangerously ill and he himself was living in daily fear of falling a prey to the deadly contagion, Vinayak, now some sixteen years of age, commenced his activities in Nasik, the District Town and well known place of pilgrimage. For educational facilities the Savarkars continued to reside in the city ever since they came there in the Plague days and never again returned to their native village. Vinayak soon found a handful of souls in sympathy with his political creed and along with

them founded formally the Mitramela—a society which according to the Police reports was since its very inception a revolutionary organisation which had for its chief aim the achievement of the Political Independence of India and which meant to achieve it, if need be, even by an armed rebellion. It carried on two-fold propaganda—open and secret. Its watchword was Instruction, Insurrection, and Action.

This is not the place to enter into a detailed description of the activities of this secret circle nor do we wish here to arrogate to ourselves the right of judging them. We have not before us the full history of any of those secret societies which later on spread a network all over India, as told by the men who worked in them or died in carrying out its designs. Nor does the mere fact that we do not enter into the question of closely examining them here, indicate that we in any way mean to hold them before the eyes of the public as an enviable activity. All that we mean to do here is to relate a few details that we cull from the scanty Government reports, from the judgments of Courts that later on condemned and convicted many a leader of these organisations. Ours is the simple task of recanting a few biographical notes and place them before the public as a piece of history, leaving them all to judge for themselves.

Enough therefore to state here that the Mitramela which Vinayak founded in Nasik about the year 1900 or so, soon developed into a very active

organisation. They soon began to dominate all public life in the city, the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, were celebrated under their auspices. Lectures used to be delivered from several platforms. The schools were their chief strongholds. The revolutionary doctrines were widely preached and youths initiated in the secret societies. Weekly sittings were held, where history was studied and speeches delivered. Vinayak used to style it "the real national university which did not only train patriots to think but even to act; not only to admire the heroes that died for their country in the past, but also to act themselves as patriotically and die as heroically even in the present". These activities of this determined group brought about such a vivid change in the public life at Nasik that the Government thought it necessary to take a serious notice of it and issued special orders to keep it under a strict watch.

CHAPTER II

WORK IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

"The Hero is not fed on sweets
Daily his own heart he eats" *Emerson*

IN 1901 Vinayak passed his entrance examination. In spite of his political pre-occupations he never neglected his studies nor allowed his comrades to do that. So throughout his educational career he never failed. A large party arranged by the society and attended by several leading men of the city gave him a hearty send off on the eve of his leaving Nasik for Poona. When he meant to enter

the Fergusson College, Vinayak significantly observed "we had uptil now to confine our activities to the Nasik District alone. But now I have decided to utilise this opportunity of my entering the Fergusson College at Poona to further our cause and to spread our mission throughout Maharashtra. For there I can find grouped together many of the rising youths who later on would be the leaders of public thought and action. If I could mould their minds and inspire them all with our principles then when they go back to their different districts and towns they would carry with them the torch that would perhaps set all Maharashtra a flame. In the small residency of the Fergusson College I shall be able to sound the heart of Maharashtra at a touch, to mould the province at a stroke. These are my hopes; at least I mean to try my best to accomplish it—whatever the results be".

And it is true that whatever the results were, he kept his word: he tried his best. Throughout the four years of his stay in the college residency, Vinayak was ceaselessly circulating his revolutionary tenets in the minds of the youths who gathered there from all parts of Maharashtra. Vinayak ever since his boyhood was a voracious reader. Even when in the School he was often styled by his indifferent mates as a book-worm. He had studied all Moropant and Vaman and many other Marathi poets. History was his special pursuit. He had already read almost all revolutionary history as

well as the volumes of the Stories of Nations series. His oratorical powers were such that in the trial which later on took place, the Police referring to these days reported " though he could have hardly been 22, he had already developed into an accomplished orator of an enviable rank." His eloquence exercised a wonderful effect on the masses: while when he dealt with some philosophical or literary subjects, the learned and the wise were ever struck by the polished diction, the charming fluency and the soundness and cogency of the argument he had in hand.

No wonder then that this early erudition and oratorical powers exercised an irresistable influence on the minds of his colleagues in the Fergusson college. His fame spread fast: he soon became a notable figure in the political gatherings and circles of Poona herself. There was the great Tilak. Then there was the other Maratha patriot who, though less known to fame outside Maharashtra, was yet a great favourite with the young generation of the province and through his masterly writings in the wellknown *Kal*—delivered, as if through a veil the message of Freedom and strove to sow seeds of revolutionary thought in those days when others were afraid to refer even to a Home Rule propaganda in India. It was Shivram Mahadeo Paranjpe. Savarkar came in contact with both these notable persons in the public life of Maharashtra. He conducted a weekly in his college clubs, a manuscript copy of which was published

every Sunday. There often appeared articles in this weekly which later on used to be published in the foremost papers in Poona and widely read in Maharashtra. All leading students' associations and societies came soon to be dominated by the "Savarkar Camp". The college halls began to reverberate with the oratorical flourishes and periods of the youthful speakers. The lectures on Italian revolution : the seven stages of revolutionary evolution : and other subjects delivered by Savarkar would long be remembered by those who had once heard them as best samples of Marathi eloquence and revolutionary literature. While the easy going, pleasure-hunting, fashionable student world was full of tea-parties and matches, this austere brotherhood of a dangerous sect wended their way every Sunday evening towards a small deserted temple of Shiva in a cavity of the hill not far from the college quarters, assembled there one by one, would sit long in devising ways and means to spread their propaganda far and wide and as to how they could organise and arm the nation for the War of Independence which to their mind seemed to be the only and indispensible passport to political freedom in the present day world. They initiated new converts to their society and administered the vow which bound them one and all to sacrifice in the sacred cause of Indian Independence, their dearest and nearest and if need be to die either sword in hand, or on the gallows, or in the prison cells.

Ominous are the shadows which coming events at times cast forth : some of these Indian youths were in later life actually called upon to face all these terrible tests and it must honestly be admitted that even in the hour of trial some of them flinched not, but bore witness to their faith, even as they had avowed to do, in letter, and spirit.

These activities of Vinayak naturally alarmed the college authorities. Many of them had formed a very high opinion of his abilities but honestly felt that they were more likely to ruin the youth than help him on to a useful career if he was allowed to indulge in his revolutionary activities unchecked. Some of them tried to win him over to the Moderate School of politics while others openly expressed their misgivings that the youth was likely to turn out one of the most dangerous demagogues in India.

But this counsel of teachers had no effect on Vinayak who took his lessons in politics from the lives of Mazzini, Shivaji, Garribaldi and Ramdas. He and his comrades went on their way. They all dressed alike, lived frugally, studied hard, passed their examinations regularly, used swadeshi, took manly exercise and discussed nothing but the political questions and how nations in the world shook off their fetters of bondage and how India ought to dare and die till she won. They at times undertook trips to the old castles associated with heroic deeds of their forefathers, not to treat themselves there to tea parties, or idle tramping and

romping but the far more serious business of studying and revisualising the exploits of their fathers. In one of such trips they visited Sinhgad, immortally associated with Tanaji's name, and there they restated their faith and standing in reverence to the heroic memory of the dead warrior, reaffirmed their determination and prayed that they might be given strength to die doing their duty by their race and their people and their motherland even as faithfully as Tanaji had done.

Now came the Swadeshi—boycott movement of 1905-06. The Savarkar Camp threw itself headlong into it. They carried a lecturing campaign in the city of Poona, Nasik and several other places. When the usual summer vacation came Vinayak used at times to address three to four different platforms on a single day and such was his oratorical power that mass meetings of thousands of people sat spell-bound to listen to him. He received invitations from several eminent persons from far and near in Maharashtra. In order to impress his countrymen with the necessity of conceiving a deadly dislike for the foreign goods he thought of making a big bonfire of all fereign clothes which offered a never ending excuse for people to shirk and shuffle and defer to buy new ones. The idea seemed so extreme that even Lok. Tilak expressed misgivings as to its practicability. But the Savarkar Camp took it upon themselves to create the necessary enthusiasm in the citizens and addressing a couple of meetings in

Poona decided to carry out the scheme. He opened the last meeting with a thrilling address and at the end called upon the people and especially the students to throw off the foreign clothes they still wore, and burn them down along with the lingering love that they all still felt in secret for their smoothness and finery and polish; "burn them down as a necessary propitiatory rite for ever having bought them and in the light of that huge conflagration repent and take up the Swadeshi vow". The appeal was irresistible. Hundreds threw down in the heap, caps, coats, aprons and shirts—whatever *vilayathi* as such they wore. Some one referred to the economical unsoundness of the procedure. Vinayak reminded the gentleman that the value of the moral effect the bonfire would create could not be calculated in annas and pies. "It is not the *videshi* cloth that we burn, but *videshi* itself—the treacherous attachment to foreigners and consequent betrayal of our Nation that we mean to burn here". The huge heap of clothes and other discarded articles was mounted on cars and was taken out in a procession as a sacrificial offering would be. The crowd swelled and swelled till the great leader Lok. Tilak, not in any way dissatisfied to see his misgiving falsified, came out to lead his people. The *videshi* articles were all poured out in a big maiden and set on fire. The conflagration rose, illuming the audience that ranged round the Holi and stirring speeches were delivered by Tilak

and Paranjpe in which the latter taking out a *videshi* coat from the discarded heap, described how those tiny pockets of that *videshi* coat had stealthily carried away Indian money and diadems and crowns! "Now let thy treacherous charm, Oh little witch, that hiding thyself in this tiny pocket bled a nation white, be burnt to ashes! consume, Fire; consume it and along with it all our national sins!

The startling news of this first Indian "Holi," this bonfire of foreign clothing created a stir and lighted up a controversy in the Indian press that raged long and bore its sparks and cinders as far as the Bengalee and the Patrika in Calcutta.

The bitter criticism of the Anglo-Indian papers on this latest phase of the British boycott movement alarmed the college authorities. They determined to dissociate themselves as strongly as possible from the affair to avoid Government displeasure and to save the institution from being dragged into political troubles. The Professors moreover belonged themselves to that economical school of thought which hated boycott as they feared it was prone to create hatred and in politics strongly dissented from Lok. Tilak. Naturally the prominent part played by Mr. Savarkar in the boycott movement and especially in the burning down of the foreign cloth, was so furiously resented by them that they determined to make an example of the incident. Accordingly the college authorities ordered that Mr. Savarkar should be fined 10

rupees and be rusticated from the college residencies within twenty-four hours.

The whole nationalist press of Maharashtra was loud in condemnation of this high handed action of the college authorities. Tilak's *Kesari* thundered for weeks. The citizens of Nasik deliberately imitated Poona and publicly burnt heaps of foreign clothes. Towns and cities passed resolutions in appreciation of Mr. Savarkar's public spirit and raised a fund to pay off the college fine. Of course the fund much exceeded the little amount of fine and consequently the excess was paid by Mr. Savarkar to the popular industrial fund—the Paisa Fund—of Mr. Kale. Fortunately the Bombay University was wise enough not to take much seriously this controversy and Vinayak was allowed to appear for his final examination—the B. A. But as throughout the year he had been restlessly carrying on the political propaganda and as at the eleventh hour he got rusticated from the college, every one feared he would fail to the delight of those who simply waited for an opportunity to malign the swadeshi and boycott movement as one that encouraged vagabondism in students. But Savarkar applied himself to his studies during the few weeks he could snatch from this political hubbub with such deligence that he came out successful in the B. A. examination that very year and received public congratulations from the nationalists in Maharashtra. Mr. Savarkar was the first student who had been rusticated from the Government

aided educational institutions in India for participating in swadeshi movements. The leading moderate paper of Bombay, *The Indu Prakash*, referring to the incident admitted the extraordinary gifts of the youth but added. "but he had ever been an ill-tongued messenger of extremism. He propounded dangerous doctrines and led the students astray."

Mr. Savarkar graduated in 1905. As soon as he was thus freed from the fetters of an university curriculum he first undertook to organise the different societies that he had established at different centres and were but loosely held together. With this view he arranged for a general secret assembly to which all should send their representatives to ponder over the constitution and the future policy of their association. It was a memorial gathering. No less than two hundred representatives from several secret groups in Maharashtra assembled there. The imposing ceremony and songs and the commnon vow with which the offerings of flowers and the auspicious rice they administered to themselves, all standing in reverence and deliberately uttering word by word as Vinayak dictated it, the exallation which a dedication to a great ideal naturally invested life with, and the thrilling consciousness that all this was to be dared and done in the glorious cause of the Freedom of their Motherland, of striving to react the deeds of Shivaji, Baji, Mazzini and Kosuth elevated the whole scene to a holy sacrament.

Vinayak in a brilliant speech formulated the future policy of the association and declared that as they in their college days strove to sow the seeds of revolution in all Maharashtra so thence forth they ought to carry their mission to other sister provinces out of Maharashtra and convert the college and the camp to their views. With this expansive propaganda in view the amalgamated association was named as "Abhinava Bharat" the Young—the rising India.

Soon after this event Mr. Savarkar went on a lecturing tour. The ballads of Sinhgad and Baji Deshpande which he composed about this time as well as the stirring national and revolutionary songs of a celebrated poet Govind who too, the Government prosecution later on asserted, was a member of the Abhinava Bahrat and was an enthusiastic follower of Mr. Savarkar used to be recited by a singing party on such occasions, as these tours and grew so popular throughout Maharashtra that Government soon found it necessary to proscribe them and confiscate all copies of the books where ever found. Nay, a possession of them was made a ground for a presumption of the possessors revolutionary inclination and sympathy. But in spite of it all the ballads yet live. The books were ruthlessly hunted out and destroyed, but the ballads lived and thrived from lip to lip and almost religiously remembered and cherished, can still be heard recited in towns and hamlets amidst admiring circles of the Mathrata people.

After he returned from tour Mr. Savarkar meant to take up law course and study in Bombay but just then Pandit Shamji Krishna Varma, the founder of the Home Rule Society in London offered some scholarships to encourage Indian youths to travel and stay and study politics in free and foreign lands. Mr. Savarkar decided to apply for one of these scholarships. The strong recommendations of Mr. Tilak and Mr. Paranjpe in favour of Mr. Savarkar easily secured one of those scholarships for him. Mr. Savarkar decided to proceed to England to read law. In this project Mr. Chiplunker too, the able Karbhari to the Raja of the Jawhar State, who had got his eldest daughter married to Mr. Savarkar came forth to encourage and financially assist his son-in-law.

By this time Mr. Savarkar had already incurred sufficient Government displeasure to come under a strict police surveillance. His speeches in his last tour were undoubtedly revolutionary and if the Government still hesitated to lay hand on him it was only for the fear of making him all the more popular on its account. Still one of his speeches at Nasik was so virulent and the general temper of the people had grown so explosive that the question of arresting Savarkar was once seriously discussed. The news reached Mr. Savarkar and he too for a few days was hourly expecting an arrest. But just then the news of his getting the "Shivaji fellowship" founded by Pandit Shamji reached India and the Government thought it better to take no further

steps as they excepted Savarkar would leave India for England where in all probabilities he would be overawed by the might of Britain and would in the light of greater experience and riper age be forced to revise his political creeds. Moreover the prospects of a Barrister's paying career were sure, to judge from several other cases, to make him much more worldly wise and unwilling to run mad risks.

Thus the Government and many a wise man thought. But the young enthusiast was thinking otherwise. In his speech at one of the secret sittings of his society he declared that as it became very easy to spread their political tenets in Maharashtra by getting hold of the source of all future political initiation and lead—the intelligent youths of Maharashtra who were destined to control the next generation in that province, at the Fergusson College where the pick of them were found collected and within easy and effective touch, even so this second opportunity if well used, was sure to enable him to come into a close contact with the pick of the young and the rising Indian generation and thus help them to scatter the seeds of Indian revolution far and wide in the land at a single stroke. The youths that go over to Europe to study or stay are generally the representatives of either the wealthiest or the most gifted and energetic element in the Indian Nation. If but they could be initiated and trained to revolutionary thought and action, they when coming back would serve as so many

centres in the land and from the exalted positions, which they were bound to occupy as barristers and professors and officers in all departments of life were likely to render matchless service to the cause of Indian Independence. It was a golden opportunity he said that would take him into the very heart of their opponents' fortress and show him the sources of their strength and their weakness. Moreover he promised his associates, as the informers reported, that he would try his best to introduce himself to the Russian secret organizations, which then were grown most powerful and with the bomb and the bayonets of spasmodic risings and assassination terrorised the Russian Czarist Government as never before, and learn their methods and means.

One more incident that took place about this time is worth noting in the light of all that has been recorded before. There came a Sadhu named Agamya Yogin to Maharashtra and was for a while known to fame as one who though a recluse was yet much interested in the political movement and had delivered several speeches in support of the advanced school of political thought. In some of his speeches in Poona he invited the students to organise themselves and promised to reveal a scheme of his own if they could send some of their trusted leaders to see him. The students of Poona thereupon wired to Mr. Savarkar who was in Bombay, to go to Poona. Accordingly he went there and addressing the students in a memorable speech

approved of the idea and being himself chosen as the leading member to represent them; interviewed Agamya Guru—the Swami above referred to. After an informal talk for a while the Swami made some ordinary and common place remarks on organisation and the interview ended. This was all that happened between Mr. Savarkar and the Swami and this incident would have been forgotten as trivial but for its funny sequence. The Police seem to have marked it all and reported to their higher officers and they to theirs: till years afterwards one day Mr. Savarkar was much amused to read in the Rowlatt report a passage which seriously stated that he owed his first political inspiration to Swami Agamya Guru. The reader too, we doubt not, would be equally amused to learn of this splendid police discovery after what they have gathered about Mr. Savarkar's activities even from this summary sketch of his life. It is at times such ill informed reports and statements that commissions sit solemnly pondering over and generally base their serious conclusions upon.

Even while he was preparing himself for the voyage Mr. Savarkar established a centre of the Abhinava Bharat Secret Society in Bombay, and recruited several students from the Wilson and Elphinstone and other colleges and Institutions and conducted a weekly named "Vihari". So attractive and inspired were his writings that the Vihari rose to a sudden prominence in the rank of Marathi papers and was sold out in thousands even though

Savarkar's name was not publicly associated with the paper. When all preparations were completed, Mr. Savarkar sailed for London somewhere in May or June 1906 at the age of two or three and twenty. The City of Nasik gave him a public send off. Few men were ever loved more devotedly by their friends and relatives than Mr. Savarkar was. The city of Nasik was full of his followers and friends who looked upon him as upon a young angel and devotedly prayed that he might soon come back to them after some four years or so which were expected to be necessary for the completion of the contemplated legal course in London.

How little they knew that some twenty long and trying and terrible years of captivity and exile, of transportation and worse were yet to intervene between their payers and their fulfilment. The city of Nasik had to pay fearfully in subsequent years for the attachment and loving loyalty it bore to Mr. Savarkar and his principles. But down to this day, the city prides over the fact that the Savarkar pre-eminently belonged to Her and loves to call herself " Savarkar's Nasik. "

CHAPTER III

Propaganda in England

Resistance to aggression is not only justifiable but imperative, Non-resistance hurts both egoism and attruism.

Herbet Spencer

Even while on board the ship Mr. Savarkar lay not idle though for a man of his tender heart and loving and lovable nature home sickness was bound

to weigh heavily on his mind yet in spite of the dear memory of devoted friends and favourites and relations that made him pine and often moved him to tears he immediately opened his patriotic campaign amongst the few Indian students who sailed by the same steamer. A characteristic reminiscence was related to us by one of them now a distinguished Barrister in Northern India, which will illustrate the inner working of Savarkar's mind. This gentleman was then, like Mr. Savarkar himself, a raw youth of some 21 years of age and the only son of his mother. He came off a rich and respectable family. Naturally he was so overpowered by the trying experience of being left alone amidst strangers and the insolent foreigners who generally form the majority of the passengers that return to England by those steamers after their stay in the "Dependency", and physically so weakened by the terrible sea sickness to which he like many an Indian unused for generation to sea voyages fell a victim, that he once actually thought of returning home as soon as the steamer touched the first port of her voyage. One night he happened to leave his cabin and went up to the deck where he saw Savarkar intently looking at the blue and beautiful sky bedecked with stars and lisping some lines by himself. On being roused from that reverie, Mr. Savarkar admitted to his friend that he was so deeply touched by the natural beauty of the scene and the assuring calmness of the sea that poetry flowed and numbers came unasked

to his lips. Glad to discover that in his young companion he had the luck to come in contact with a poet, the gentleman in question pressed Mr. Savarkar to recite and translate some of the Marathi verses to him. They were so lovely that the gentleman formed a very high opinion of Mr. Savarkar and felt powerfully drawn towards him. Their attachment ! grew and confidently he consulted Mr. Savarkar whether he should return to India as soon as he reached Aden. "Why ?', Asked Savarkar in astonishment. Is it the sea sickness or the home sickness, or both ? Look here friend, how unmanly our race is daily growing. Not a couple of centuries have yet passed when Maratha women not only sailed the waters of Bombay but even commanded flotillas. Then look at the English boys : when they came to India in Clive's time, it took six months to reach our land, so that their relations in England had to wait for a year even to get news of their safe arrival in India. But that did not dismay them. They came to strange lands and amidst the hostile millions not only lived, but fought and won, and became masters of an Empire. While we young men tremble to sail even amidst these luxurious conveniences of a first class voyage and with rich arrangements made in advance by our parents to smoothen an easy course of life in the lands to which we are bound. No! No ! You must not go back. You say your mother is rich and cares not a jot for a Barrister's practice. But friend, the mother of our mothers—our motherland is not so rich. She wants her sons

to go to foreign lands for a while, that they may learn what the world is like, what the strength of their foes and what the weaknesses of themselves. She wants them to grow strong and manly and daring. We must go to England, France and Russia and learn how to organise a Revolution, win back our Freedom. If not the petty personal financial necessity then, this Grand Ideal atleast ought to deter thee from returning home. The memory of our dear ones ? Friend, it grieves none more acutely than it does me. But then we must not only bear the anguish of our separation from them, but if need be even bear to witness them and ourselves rather crucified than betray the sacred mission of our life. Our mother is dear. But dearer by far is, ought to be, our motherland the mother of the mothers of our race."

We have cited this anecdote almost as the gentleman told us, so far, as he could relate it recollecting Mr. Savarkar's words. It was in this spirit that he ever worked. As soon as he reached England he was welcomed by Pandit Shamji, the patriotic and distinguished Indian leader who then was advocating the Home Rule propaganda in England which was considered as too advanced and dangerous an activity by the then leading lights of the National Congress and even the nationalist party.

But within a year of Savarkar's reaching London, things moved so rapidly that even the Home Rule by pacific means became a discarded and

meaningless cry. Savarkar first proved to many of the advanced politically minded Indian youths in London that Peaceful Revolution is more or less a misnomer when applied to the solution of such questions as the Indian political one. He started a society named. "Free India Society" to whose weekly sittings all Indians were admitted and whose proceedings were openly conducted. On these occasions he used to deliver masterly speeches on history of Italy, France and America and the revolutionary struggles they had to undergo, and was never tired of pointing out how while the words Peaceful Evolution, had a meaning and a sense, peaceful revolution had neither. His spirited style, erudition, the force of his arguments evidently bore, and the passionate sincerity which made even those who deferred from him, listen to him with attention and respect—soon enabled him to carry the youthful and impressionable student world with him. Out of those then who felt attracted towards him and admitted they were convinced of the soundness of his views he used to pick out the best—and initiate them into the inner-circle of the Abhinava Bharat Society. Thus Indian Students at Cambridge, Oxford, Edinborough, Manchester and other centres of education, were rapidly brought under the influence of the Revolutionary tenets.

Pandit Shamji himself was frank and brave enough to publicly proclaim his joining the revolutionary ranks and after writing an article in the Indian Sociologist, his well-known paper, on the bomb and

the Russian secret societies, closed the Home Rule society, and withdrew to Paris. He was the first of the most prominent Indian leaders to publicly demand absolute Independence and declare that as nothing short of such Ideal could be the political aim of a nation, especially of India, she could never come to her own, never win political Freedom without embarking on a relentless war, having recourse to force. He handed over the India House to Savarkar's management and came not only to trust but to cherish a loving and paternal regard for the youthful leader of the Abhinava Bharat. Mr. Savarkar too felt, but, complimented by being styled by the English press which soon began to howl and bark at him as Shamji's Lieutenant. If some of his friends resented it on the ground that Panditji himself was a later addition to the Revolutionary ranks and took no prominent active part in the work, Mr. Savarkar used to remark that the bold and open advocacy of the Revolutionary activities by such a prominent leader as Panditji was in itself an active piece of work. There are several interesting stories and incidents related to us as to the conversations and co-operation between these two remarkable men, one a veteran bordering even then on sixty, the other a heroic youth not more than twenty-five. But the limitations of this sketch as well as the present political situation in India bar us from recording them all here.

For the identical reasons we cannot exactly ascertain and describe the manifold activities of

the Abhinava Bharat in England. Enough to say that men like Lala Hardayal, the brilliant scholar who went to England for I. C. S., there took upon himself the vow of dedicating himself to the cause of Indian Independence, resigned his Government and University Scholarships and ever since that day to this remains an exile in foreign lands, now conducting the Gadar and setting a flame the young Indians in America, then moving in the high and imperial circles of Germany and Turkey in the days of war to see if Germany could provide means to foment rebellion in India just when England was caught in a nap in the first days of the war; Mr. Chattopadhyaya : the gifted brother of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who though less known to fame and though his ways and methods being illegal may seem to many of us of questionable character has yet worked far more strenuously and sacrificed and suffered far more rigorously and even recklessly than his renowned sister has done in the cause of Indian Independence and who therefore is entitled to be remembered by his countrymen, and yet lives forgotten in exile in Germany and other lands for the last twenty years or so; Mr. V. V. S. Aiyer whose name is a household word in Madras : these and several other able men whose names it is impossible to mention here, were one after another won over to the Revolutionalist party, and worked hand in hand with Mr. Savarkar and soon rendered the Abhinava Bharat a force to be so seriously counted within Indian

politics that for years a greater part of the energy of the Indian Government had to be chiefly directed in combating it.

In the meanwhile the agitation in India that originated in the partition of Bengal but had now assumed dimensions far wider than that issue and was raised by the Revolutionist's participation in it, to touch the very fundamental question of the political emancipation of India, became intensed. In the Punjab the deportations of Lala Lajpatrai and Sirdar Ajitsingh fell on the people like a thunderbolt. The news reached London and became the most powerful argument in the hands of the Revolutionists. Where, they asked, was thenceforth any hope of your winning your rights through mere wordy agitations and resolutions when your primary rights could at any time be trampled under foot in such high-handed fashion and the most popular demands on constitutional lines were thus met by throwing all laws and constitutions to the wind ! In a meeting that was held to record the usual protest resolutions, this argument of the Revolutionists proved most telling and the resolution failed. Then what are we to do ? asked the people. A member of the Abhinava Bharat who since has become one of the distinguished patriots well-known to fame and has only very recently been sent to jail for using force in defending the rights of Indian peasants rose and openly proclaimed that he, a graduate, would throw away his chances of a splendid University career in England

and go to Russia to study the art of explosives and meet the Government in India even as the Russians met the Czarists in Europe, if but financially assisted. He was, enthusiastically cheered—subscription flowed in, there and then, on the express condition that no accounts should be asked or kept. That very week the Maratha youth along with one from Bengal and another from Madras, started for Paris and a hunt for a Russian Revolutionist who would initiate them into the mysteries of bomb-making began.

Even before this incident, experiments in bomb making were being carried out by youthful Indian Revolutionists here and there. Terrible was the price they had at times to pay for their inexperienced ventures. Several instances happened when premature explosions blew off the hand or the eye and the youthful experimenters left terribly mangled on the floor. Even in Paris many a bogus Russian professors duped and deceived and filched away as much money as they could. It seemed almost hopeless to get the clue. At last a real man was found. He was an exile and wanted for by the Russian Government. He taught the Indian Revolutionists the art of explosives and the best way to utilise it in Revolutionary work, handed over an authoritative book-let describing and illustrating all sorts of bombs and their applications—and took not a pie. This bomb manual the police assert, was later on printed on cyclotype by Mr. Savarkar and his colleagues in the

India House and distributed in India. It contained more than fifty long pages. Its copies were found in searches that later on took place in the conspiracy cases in India at such widely distant places as the Manicktola garden in Calcutta, in Allahabad, in Lahore, in Nasik and several other places. Side by side with printing and distributing this dangerous treatise in India, lessons were regularly given to the chosen members of the Abhinava Bharat in London and Paris in manufacturing the bomb. Mr. Savarkar, the police reports assert, himself at times conducted these experiments and gave secret lessons in bomb-making in India House and in Paris in the afternoon and without a minute's rest came down to the Free India Society's hall to deliver open lectures on History, politics, economy and other cognate subjects to packed Indian audience.

The first impulse of the Revolutionists was to try the bomb in England. But Mr. Savarkar dissuaded them from doing that, for the reason that that would expose them to the Police before they were able to take the art to India. It was therefore agreed to send out three or four men to different provinces in India to instruct the Indian Revolutionist in the art and when several had learnt it, then begin the dreadful campaign of terrorigating all over the country. Accordingly they were despatched to India and went to different provinces. Soon the news came that a bomb was thrown at Mr. Kingsford's carriage in Bengal and missing him,

the Kenedies were killed. India was shocked, no less was the India Government. The bomb brought in with it so dangerous a factor in the Indian politics as to effect a fundamental change in its aspect and value and meaning.

Thrilling are the stories that are told about the activities of the conspirators at this stage in England. The reckless daring, the unscrupulous schemes they undertook to carry out their design, the dangerous plots to blow up a few bombs in England itself and the eagerness to dare and die for the Motherland, that like a heroic mania possessed these enthusiasts so strongly, that it became difficult for the leaders to persuade them to live a little longer! But space and circumstances deter us from relating them all here. The activity of the India House grew really amazing. Besides, the weekly meetings, the daily discussions, the ceaseless work of writing, printing, packing and posting thousands of revolutionary pamphlets and booklets addressed to hundreds of places in India, the lessons in explosives and the dreadful experiments at their actual manufacture—besides taking the leading and labouring part in all these activities Mr. Savarkar managed to do scholarly work of first class magnitude in writing two voluminous historical works. No sooner he reached London he began the translation of Mazzini's writings in Marathi and within a year of his departure from India had it finished and published in Nasik. The book grew so popular as to secure a record sale in Marathi

literature. All leading newspapers reviewed " Savarkar's Mazzini " in leading articles. Students were made by their teachers, and sons by their fathers, to commit whole passages to their memories from the masterly introduction which Mr. Savarkar wrote for the book. In some places the volume was taken out with religious books in procession, and when years after it secured the last distinction which is the general fate of such books and was proscribed by the Government, hunted out and destroyed, people hid the copies at imminent risk and preserved them as a precious relic to be handed down to their posterity.

If his first book created such a stir in Maharashtra alone, his second book "The War of Independence " or the history of the national rising of 1857 was to carve out a name throughout India as well as England. After having related to his countrymen the story of a European war of Independence in his Mazzini, Mr. Savarkar thought of relating the story of the Indian national rising in 1857 with a view to instruct the people how a revolution could be organised on a vast scale even under the peculiar Indian environments and limitations. The Government soon got an inkling of the affair and dreaded the effects of Savarkar's writings to such an extent that they proscribed the book before it was fully written. This singular course, which perhaps is the only one of its kind in the history of printing, was rightly resented by some of the English papers themselves. Mr.

Savarkar wrote a spirited letter in protest of this procedure and poured vials of ridicule on the nervousness of the authorities. But let the authorities do what they liked the book was printed and published on the continent ; not only that but by the most ingenious means the Revolutionists succeeded in smuggling it into India too. Hundreds of copies found their way to Indian homes and hostels, bound neatly under such inoccuous coverings as " Pick Wick papers " or " Scott's works." Even Sir Valentine Chirole could not but admit the literary excellence and remarkable scholarship that the book displayed. It indisputably proved that the so-called mutiny was in fact a national rising whose war-cry was India for Indians. As one scholar observed the book revolutionised the conception as to the nature of the Revolutionary rising of 1857. From the stupid accidental, ideal-less mutiny of unprincipled fanatics and rogues on account of their discontent as to the order of using a certain pattern of cartridges, the research of Mr. Savarkar reinstated the great revolt of 1857 to its real dignity of being a life and death struggle of a nation and a people to win back their political freedom. It was truly as great a discovery as any in the realms of historical scholarship. No wonder that it grew immensely popular. Down to this day you can often find enthusiastic men travelling aud inquiring just to have a copy of it. A Sikh gentleman had seen a rare copy sold in South America for 130 rupees.

In 1907 the English people took it into their head to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of their victory over the mutineers of 1857. Dramas and lectures and special numbers of daily leading papers in India and in England vied with each other to revive the memory of 1857 and revile the so-called mutineers in the most scurrilous manner that hatred could conceive. To counteract this vilifying campaign and relate the story of the national rising faithfully and truly Mr. Savarkar organised a counter campaign to honour the memory of the Indian leaders of 1857—Nana Saheb, the Queen of Zansi, Tatya Tope, Kumar Sing, Maulavi Ahmed Saheb and the rest. It was so bold a step to take, in the very heart of the British capital to honour Nana Saheb and Tatya Tope whom the common run of Englishmen thought some species of demoniacal order, that almost all noted Indian leaders instinctively shrank from it. But Mr. Savarkar had the youths by him. A great and memorable meeting was held at India House, fasts were observed, a vow to undergo a week of self denial was taken, pamphlets named "Oh Martyrs" were distributed in thousands in England and India, students boldly appeared in Oxford and Cambridge and the Inns of Court wearing beautifully carved badges of "Honours to the martyrs of 1857" on their breasts. In streets and trains individual scuffle ensued. Even in a College the English professors lost their temper and ejaculated at the sight of the badge borne by the Indian students

"Martyrs? They were murderers! Remove the badge." Thereupon the Indian students demanded an apology from the said professors for insulting their national heroes and as a protest left the College in a body. Some lost their scholarships, some voluntarily resigned it, some were recalled by their parents. The political atmosphere in England grew daily more and more electrical. The Indian Government began to feel restless.

Then a virulent campaign began in the English press obviously organized and paid by unseen hands. The *Times* itself took the lead. The meeting held in honour of the memory of the national rising of 1857, the Free India Society meetings, the loads of revolutionary pamphlets weekly despatched to India through hundred and one channels to avoid police and censorian detection and several other open and secret activities of the Abhinava Bharat were violently attacked and Savarkar's name was openly associated with them in the columns of the English press—from the *Times* to the John Bull. Representatives came to interview Mr. Savarkar and pecked him with questions. Sometimes funny scenes ensued. The representative of one of the leading dailies once called upon Mr. Savarkar. The house maid took him to the waiting room where Mr. Savarkar was sitting absorbed in reading a book. The press representative, on observing that the maid was retiring demanded "But where is Mr. Savarkar." Surprised a little the maid politely replied "There is he: That is Mr. Savarkar."

Upon this the gentleman once more eyed the figure that sat reading by the table and refusing to believe that that thin, young, pleasant looking person could be that much dreaded Indian Revolutionist, Savarkar, could not conceal his annoyance and protested that the maid should make a fun of him in that ungentlemanly manner. But the timely intervention of Mr. Savarkar who just then happened to look up, saved the maid from further embarrassment. Stepping forth he gently welcomed the representative who now a bit confused, politely asked if he was really Mr. Savarkar. The latter smiled and said yes! "To be frank, Mr. Savarkar: I must express we had a very queer notion of your size, and age and manners." Said the representative. "Well then I hope you will excuse me for having disappointed you, in your expectations of me," Mr. Savarkar humourously put in. The gentleman laughed and said in a complimentary way that their staff could never dream they had all along been busy in vigorously opposing the activities of a beardless youth!" "Never mind,' Savarkar smiled, 'now they know it and so should cease opposing me any longer." Of course the English press was not going to do anything of that sort. The John Bull asserted "youth and intelligence seem stamped upon his face" and hated Mr. Savarkar all the more on that account. The *Manchester Guardian*, the *Daily News* and other liberal papers used to call him an idealist and though antagonistic, used a polite and often admiring pen.

Mr. Savarkar lost no opportunity of coming in contact with the Sein Fein and other Irish Revolutionary parties. He kept writing articles to the Gaelic American in New York, and other revolutionary papers which used to be often translated and wildly circulated by the revolutionary organs in India such as the *Yugantar* of Calcutta, the *Vihari* of Bombay and several other national papers. Besides this he had under his consideration a scheme—a little beginning too was made to put it in practice of organizing all the anti-British disaffected nations of the world and link together the Irish, Egyptian, Chinese, Indian, and Turkish revolutionist societies of the world with a view to prepare for a simultaneous rising. In order to advertise the national cause and defeat the indefatigable English campaign to paint India and her people in their darkest aspects alone on the canvas of the "World opinion", Mr. Savarkar got articles written and translated into German, French, Portuguese, Chinese and Russian papers besides himself writing to Irish and other papers conducted in English. There cannot be two opinions on the point that the credit of attracting the attention of the educated world to Indian Political problem, and registering their sympathies with the Indian nationalist struggle to free themselves from the fetters of a slave is due primarily to the most strenuous pioneering work done by the Abhinava Bharat in Europe in 1906 to 1910 under the guidance of Mr. Savarkar. Later on the assassination of Mr.

Curzon Willie, the consequent trial, statement and execution of Dhingra, Mr. Savarkar's escape at Marsceilles, made the Indian question a living issue, in European and world politics. The enemies of England all over the world began to take the Indian revolutionists seriously, and opened negotiations with their leaders. Pandit Shamji, Madame Cama and other leaders in Paris, Lala Hardayal with his *Gadar* in America, Mr. Chattopadhyaya in Germany and others yet not to be named; but equally zealous and able workers in Russia, Turkey, South America, and other parts of the world—all these trained in the traditions of the Abhinava Bharat Society carried on the campaign so vigorously that at last in the Great German War, India became an international issue and in the famous letter formulated by the Kaiser in reply to the demands of President Wilson the question of complete Political Independence of India was openly and authoritatively broached as one of the indispensible conditions of world peace.

CHAPTER IV

THE STORM GATHERS

> "When he who adores thee has left but the name of his faults and sorrows behind.
>
> Oh say ! wilt thou weep when they darken the fame of a life that for thee was resigned !!"

WHILE the indomitable activities of the Abhinava Bharat became so serious as to be a cause of anxiety to the Scotland Yard which had to extend its scope to France and Germany, to cope with the

Indian revolutionist propaganda, India too, lay not idle. The Manicktola case, the campaign of assassinations of Police officers and informers carried on in Bengal, the arrest of the Great Tilak and Paranjpe, and several other leaders in Maharashtra, the consequent big anti-British riots in Bombay, all and many other factors made the Indian Government wild with anxiety and rage. The spread of the secret literature of the Abhinava Bharat could not be stopped. Lieut. Governors and Governors—for example, that of United Provinces, thought it necessary to personally combat the influence, of the pamphlets such as "Oh Martyrs, Grave danger, Choose Oh Indian Princes, all of which reported to come from the powerful pen of Mr. Savarkar. Besides this, the Abhinava Bharat conducted fiery papers in Europe, namely, the "*Vande Mataram*" edited by Madame Cama, the "*Talwar*" Mr. Shamji's independently conducted *Indian Sociologist*—all these found their way to Indian Colleges, hostels and clubs and even down to the regimental lines, in spite of the most vigilant watch, proscription and fury of the Indian Government. To make the matters worse Mr. Savarkar issued from time to time pamphlets highly inflamatory, addressed to the Sikhs, printed in the Gurumukhi tongue.

The Punjab and especially the Sikhs were foremost in Mr. Savarkar's thoughts. He was very particular about winning over the Sikh brotherhood to the national side. There is an interesting

anecdote that throws much light on this question. One day Mr. Savarkar was discussing a scheme he had formulated to carry the revolutionist propaganda to the very cottages of Punjab " with a prominent Sikh member of the Abhinava Bharat. The Sikh gentleman despondently said, "Do what you can. It is so hopeless to get the Sikhs to fight against the English Government. The mabap theory and the other equally slavish one of 'Nimak Khata hai'—true to the salt that we eat, is so rampant and bored so deep down into their marrow by Government propaganda that no attempts of yours can make our sikhs fight with the Government for decades to come." Mr. Savarkar, his eyes flashing with fiery self confidence and faith exclaimed " But my friend are you not a Sikh ? Had you not been brought up in that very theory "of Panth and no nation" and "Mabapism" ? But just as the slightest awakening roused in you the heroic Hindu blood of your ancestors and made you take up a vow of striving for the Political Freedom of India unto death even so, if but touched and stirred the fire of Govind Singh will blaze up in every drop of our Sikh blood in Punjab. I say let us work out for five years on this scheme and I tell you the Government will find our Sikhs as the most determined enemies they have to face among the Indian people. Somehow or other one of these means is bound to stir them up from their denationalized and treacherous attitude of the present."

With this end in view Gurumukhi pamphlets by thousands were distributed in the regimental quarters in the Punjab. A grand festival was organised and ceremonious meeting held in London to celebrate the birthday of Guru Govind Singh. Lala Lajpatrai, Bipin Chandra Pal and several other prominent Hindus paid glowing tributes to the memory of the Great hero. Savarkar in one of his eloquent speeches hailed him as "the prophet, the warrior, the poet" in one. He had ever cherished a very high opinion of Guru Govind's personality and sincerity, loved and admired him and the warrior's brotherhood, he founded as the champions of the Hindu race. The most spirited pamphlet that he wrote specially for that occasion was named Khalsa and which inspite of proscription orders found its way to schools and colleges in Punjab and was so warmly welcomed that in several examples it was entirely committed to the memory by men and recited out as one would a poem. In order to acquaint other Hindu sec. tions with the glory and the greatness of the Sikhs in Punjab he wrote a fine book in Marathi on the History of the Sikhs—but unfortunately it was swallowed up by the Governmental "Postal Box" and never could be traced back.

In these and other ways Mr. Savarkar strove to win over the Sikhs to the Nationalist side, confident that before long the Revolutionist would succeed. And in a way his prophesy came out true. For if the attempts of the Abhinava Bharat band

did not succeed directly in India in the beginning yet later on their organ the "*Gadar*" in America and the spread of their literature amongst the Sikhs there did at last rouse them. The Canada emigrants agitation added fuel to fire and the *Comagatamaru* affair exploded the train. Thereafter hundreds of the Sikh emigrants of the Gadar party poured into India with a set purpose of organising a revolutionary rising in Punjab and the mutiny and the consequent revolts in 1914, followed by the Gadar cases in Lahore and in Burma ended in the execution of several Sikhs and the transportation of a number of them. Since then the Sikh agitation has continued down to this day.

After he left India, the Abhinava Bharat branches of Maharashtra were left under the charge of his chosen and selected friends. Very soon their work assumed such serious proportion that the Government decided to knock them down in time. They were suspected of receiving constant supply of arms, explosives and seditious literature from Mr. Savarkar in London and distributing them throughout the land. Mr. Savarkar's eldest brother Mr. Ganeshpant was twice arrested in connection with riots in Nasik and Bombay. Nasik had once to be subjected to a military demonstration to cow-down the growing insolence with which the populace greeted Government officers and Europeans. But instead of being cowed down "*Swatantrya Laxmi-Ki-Jai*!" Hail thee Goddess of liberty! became a popular cry and reverberated

from nooks and corners and city squares in defying accents. Tilak's arrest was followed by serious anti-British riots in Bombay in which many a man trained in Abhinava Bharat school was suspected of being a secret participator. In Gwalior a branch of Abhinava Bharat was prosecuted, arms were found with them, and some dozen persons got long terms of sentences for attempting to wage a war against the king. Thus when even the arrest of Messrs. Paranjpye and Tilak could not check popular agitation but only seemed to drive it deeper and directly into the hands of the Revolutionists, the Government decided to arrest the most indefatigable leader of them and have done with it. Ganeshpant was then just released from his first rigorous imprisonment of 6 months for leading the Bombay mob. He had published a pamphlet of verses which contained an inflamatory poem that citing cases after cases of those countries which won freedom asked in a recurring refrain" "who pray won Independence without going to war—without using force!"

For publishing this booklet Mr. Ganeshpant Savarkar was arrested under Section 121—A for attempting to wage a war against the king. In the search of his house several revolutionary documents and explosive manuals were found. Mr. Ganeshpant was sentenced to transportation for life. The High Court dismissed an appeal and confirmed the sentence.

The news fell like a thunderbolt on the people. Transportation for life!—That terrible word was quite a new innovation in the history of recent Indian political movement. Now politics was no joke: Ganesh was amongst the first half a dozen Indian youths who were called upon to face this terrible ordeal in days when a sentence of a few years imprisonment used to be the highest test of Political martyrdom. Vinayak read the news in the English papers as his private correspondence had long since become tabooed and so often interrupted and destroyed that he could get no regular news directly from his family. The Abhinava Bharat felt it was a blow directly aimed at them: The sentences passed on the Manicktola people were already under the consideration of the inner executive of the society in London. What happened there is still a sealed secret. One thing was noticeable. Mr. Dhingra who till then was a prominent member of the India House brotherhood, ceased to attend the clubs and to every one's surprise joined a jolly club which being controlled by Anglo-Indian officers like Mr. Curzon Willie and others was much despised by the Indian youths—the angry Revolutionists went even so far as to bring a vote of censure against the apostacy of Mr. Dhingra—it was only Mr. Savarkar's intervention that made them withdraw the resolution. Mr. Savarkar was ever given to be most lenient and forgiving to his friends even when they differed from him. "Even now if he ceases to be our friend

let us thank him still for his past services and avoid harsh words as far as possible" was his motto.

In the meanwhile the terrible blow that the Government had dealt at the little loving home of the Savarkar's was reasonably expected by the authorities to cool down Savarkar's fervour and open his eyes. He was barred from re-entering India. He got stranded in foreign land. The drudgery and dreadfulness of an exile's life stared him in the face. It was chiefly for his sake that his elder brother fell a victim to Government wrath. At home—to which he was exceptionally attached there was his beloved youngest brother—some 17 years of age and his dear young sister-in-law—now made to bear the monstrous shock of separation for life from her husband—under this calamity it was but human on the part of the Government to expect that Savarkar would cease to further endanger his family and friends and brilliant worldly prospects by giving up the mad hope of continuing the struggle for the Independence of India. To this expectation Savarkar soon replied. We have before us a letter which he wrote while his heart was bleeding for the calamity that had befallen his sister like sister-in-law, to console her. It is couched in a few fine Marathi verses: We give free English rendering of them:

CONSOLATION

My loving salutations to thee, Oh my sister! Whose love had so tenderly nursed me as to make me forget the early loss of my mother:

Thy letter gladdened my heart and made me feel truly blessed:

Blessed indeed is this family of ours in as much as it is thus privileged to serve the Lord and administer to His will!

Many a flower is born and blooms and withers away: Who has ever numbered or noted them! But behold, the flower that was plucked by that mighty Elephant, the *Gajendra*, to effect his Deliverance and was offered at the feet of the Lord and thus withered away there, stands immortalised by bards.

Even so this our motherland—our mother—craving the assistance of the Lord that she too be rescued from the crocodile clutches of Bondage enters our garden, plucks a fresh flower from the bough and offers it at His feet in worship.

Blessed indeed is this flower-garden, in as much as it is thus privileged to serve the Lord and shed its blossom in His service.

Let the rest of our flowers too be plucked thus, dedicated thus, wither thus! The garden that sheds all its flowers for the garland of the Gods is in blossom for ever! Come Oh mother! to it again and gather all its bloom and weave thy garlands for the Great Festival of the Nine Nights.

Once the momentous ninth Night, the *Navaratri* is over and the ninth garland is woven and dedicated—Kali, the Terrible, will reveal herself and lead Her Votaries to Victory.

Sister! thou hast ever been the fountain of courage: the source of inspiration to me. Thou too

art a consecrated and avowed votary to this great and holy mission. Thy consecration to a great and noble cause calls upon thee to be great and noble thyself.

Behold! On one side stands watching the Past—Souls of sages and saints and heroes of our race gone before: and on the other the Future: generations yet unborn!

May He bestow on us strength, that we may be able to acquit ourselves of this momentous responsibility in such—wise as to evoke from these godly spectators a universal " Well done!" " Well done!"

Having thus 'consoled' his sister-in-law, the indomitable youth threw himself into the whirlwind of revolutionary activities with all the more recklessness for the dreadful blow that the Government had dealt out to him. He had regularly gone through all his examinations in the Inns of Court and inspite of his ceaseless political activity had only recently passed his Final examination entitling him to be called to the Bar. But now Government was determined to crush him and his influence. A case was instituted against him by the Benchers of the Greys Inn. The Indian Police supplied materials for accusation. Mr. Savarkar was put on trial. Ultimately the Benchers, doubtless cowed down a bit by the criticism of the English papers on their conduct of arrogating to themselves the power of a Criminal Court, came to the conclusion of calling him to the Bar if but he would give an undertaking

to desist from any further seditious activities. Mr. Savarkar replied that it was unnecessary to do so as if he did anything of that sort the Courts of Law were able to call him to account. Moreover it was, he said, so difficult in those days to know what sedition meant, as shouting "*Vande Mataram*" was also construed as sedition by some officers. At last the Benchers decided not to call Mr. Savarkar to the Bar, inspite of his being entitled to it by his passing all other tests: on political grounds alone. Nevertheless they did not either strike off his name from the roll of members and gave him to understand that he had still a chance of winning back his right of being allowed to practise as an advocate by renouncing or ceasing to take to the revolutionary movement.

In the meanwhile one morning the City of London was taken aback by the startling news that Sir Curzon Willie was assassinated by an Indian youth! The morning editions that contained the news were sold in hundreds of thousands. The city talked nothing but the news. Excited groups of Englishmen could be observed in public squares, stations, trams and trains, discussing what made India to take to these Russian methods. What were the wrongs and grievances she was subjected to. Never, since 1857 had the British voters taken Indian affairs so seriously as on that morning. The evening papers came out with dark insinuations as to the connection of Dhingra, the Indian youth who shot Sir Curzon—the self same

Dhingra who had recently joined the jolly club controlled by the Anglo-Indians and filled with loyal Indians—with the Free India Society and India House and ominously—added that it must be remembered that Mr. Savarkar was the responsible leader of both these hot beds of revolutionary politics. The continental papers too caught the flame and for the next week the only prominent news or the latest about which all Europe breathlessly waited every morn and eve was further disclosures about the Indian Revolutionary plot.

But more than the Europeans or the Englishmen themselves some Indians in London felt concerned about this most startling development that Indian political activity underwent. Messrs. Surendranath Banerji, Pal, Bhavnagari, and Aga Khan were loud in condemnation of the dastardly deed. A meeting was hurriedly convened where all these shining lights of Indian community were present. Even Dhingra's father wired to London to express his feelings of abhorrence and assured the world that he felt ashamed to own Dhingra for his son. Every Indian who shook in his shoes hurried to the meeting to express his loyalty and condemn the dastardly murderer.

But the revolutionists too kept quietly watching it all. They decided to break the meeting if any attempt was made to revile Dhingra's motive. They too came to the meeting. Englishmen, Anglo-Indians, Indians, spies, detectives, all crowded the hall. Speaker after speaker denounced the murder,

the man, the motive, the revolutionary rascals and their tenets—the loudest of them being Mr. Pal himself. At last the resolution condemning in strongest terms the murder committed by Dhingra for reasons—political, was proposed, seconded but instead of putting it to the votes the President hurriedly declared it unanimously passed.

Even while these words "unanimously passed" were on the lips of the President a youthful but determined voice rose no! no! not unanimously. The President wanted to hush and brow beat and repeated "unanimously". 'No!' the protest rose again. Mr. Bhavnagari, and Mr. Aga Khan angrily shouted who is that! where is he! the Anglo-Indians rushed, the Indian leaders cast wrathful looks to find out the dissentient voice. Where is he! who is he! what is his name? a hundred angry enquiries rose and in its midst came back the voice "It is me and here am I; my name is Savarkar."

The whole meeting started to its feet. Some got so excited as to threaten and shout out kick him, pull him down, drive him out. Mr. Bhavnagari being the foremost rowdy in them. The figure that was unperturbably standing amidst this uproar said in a clear juvenile tone, "the resolution cannot be said to have been unanimously passed for I am against it." All turned towards, the figure and, reported the Manchester Guardian "discovered a thin, young and rather pale-looking youth standing firmly like one born to lead. It was

Savarkar. The very sight of Savarkar made some tremble for consequences. Kick him, down with him ! rose the cry. In the melee a Eurasian rushed forth, and dealt a heavy blow on Mr. Savarkar's face. His glasses broke and a wound caused near his eye profusely bled. But unmoved, with his face washed red in blood, he raised his right hand and emphatically but all the more calmly repeated "In spite of this all I still vote against the resolution."

The sight of their bleeding leader exasperated the revolutionists as never before. One of them took out his revolver. With an unerring eye, Mr. Savarkar detected it and signed to him to put it back. Another revolutionist rushed forward and with a lathi broke the head of the Eurasian who had assaulted Mr. Savarkar. He too profusedly bled and reeled back to his seat. In the meanwhile the Police rushed in, the whole meeting had become a pandemonium of shouts and shrieks of panic-stricken ladies who raised shrill cries and gentlemen who rushed under their chairs to cover themselves from the imaginary "Bombs" which they fancied the revolutionary had brought there to blow up the whole show. The Police soon removed Mr. Savarkar from the hall and held him in custody. At this Mr. Surendranath left the meeting protesting that it was cowardly to assault Mr. Savarkar who was perfectly within his right to have his protesting vote recorded. There was a general rush to the door. The meeting broke up. The revolutionaries carried the day. After holding

him for an hour or so in custody the police releas-ed Mr. Savarkar and expressed their regret for the fact of his being thus assaulted and even offered to take the Eurasian too into custody if Mr. Savarkar wished to do so. But Mr. Savarkar simply smiled and said: he had already got his reward and I think that is enough.

The first thing that Mr. Savarkar did as soon as he came out of the Police hands was to pen a letter to the *Times* in defence of his action in the meeting. He wrote that in as much as Mr. Dhin-gra was not till then even put on trial and thus it was not at all clear whether he was the right man or if so whether his motive was personal or politi-cal one or if he acted in full possession of his senses or otherwise, it would have been an act of usurp-ing the rights of the courts to thus condemn him unheard. Any such act was bound to prejudice his case. So firstly in the interests of justice itself he meant to oppose the resolution by sending an amendment to it. But instead of allowing him to do so they wanted to carry out the resolution. Well even then the right course for the President was to declare that the resolution had been passed almost unanimously with but one dissentient voice. But in-stead of doing anything like that the leaders of the meeting began to howl and hiss, got completely panic struck and almost lost their senses. More-over he failed to understand the reason of this unseemly and cowardly haste with which the In-dians rushed to condemn the murder of an English-

man by an Indian when the Englishmen themselves were self-composed as not to convene a meeting and condemn Dhingra till he was tried and convicted of the offence by the courts. The letter appeared in the *Times* and at once became the chief topic in all important political circles in England. Many a daily wrote notes and some appreciated the point raised by Mr. Savarkar. The man who had assaulted Mr. Savarkar and had his head split in consequence, wrote a letter to defend his action and bragged of being proud for having dealt "a genuine British blow" although he himself being an Eurasian was only half British. But a rejoinder soon appeared in the *Times* which reminded him of the "Straight Indian Lathi" that sent the British blow reeling and bleeding back.

In the mean while Dhingra's trial opened. He had a paper on his person when he shot Sir Curzon Willie which declared the reasons that made him commit that assassination. But that document the Police refused to publish in spite of his demand to do so. Attempts were made by responsible Englishmen to persuade Dhingra to state that he was not in his senses when he shot and pass off the affair as the mad action of a lunatic. But Dhingra refused to put in any defence at all and emphatically maintained in a long stirring speech that went round the world-press that he assassinated Sir Curzon Willie "to avenge the inhuman sentences passed on Indian youths of death and transportation for life whose only crime was that they took up

arms in order to free their motherland." The document too, that he had on his person and the Police wanted to suppress was also mysteriously and secretly published with a foreword as a "Challenge" to the English Government and distributed broadcast throughout India, America and England. Nevertheless the English papers refused to print it in their columns. Thereupon a dodge was resorted to. An Irish friend of the Indian revolutionist smuggled the "Challenge" in the columns of the *Daily News* the leading liberal daily, without the knowledge of the editor himself to the great chagrin of the Police and the press. The document was read and discussed even in the ministerial circles and only recently reminiscences published about Mr. Loyd George, told us that he and Mr. Churchill could not but admire that statement as the finest piece in the patriotic literature of the world. Nay, they are said to have compared Dhingra to Roman martyrs. Mr. Hyndman openly wrote in *Justice* that though he condemned his means yet he must admit that the impeachment Dhingra had levelled against the British Government was literally true.

The publishing of the "Challenge" was a mystery which the London Police could scarcely solve. It was thickly rumoured that the writer of that challenge was Savarkar and when the original that was found on Dhingra's person was suppressed, the Abhinava Bharat got that copy of it which they had in their possession published only to

humiliate and frustrate the Scotland yard machinations. This rumour along with the fact that Mr. Savarkar had boldly sought for and obtained an interview with Mr. Dhingra, lay him open to serious charges against him of being a party to that dreadful affair. But Dhingra stood firm, to the last moment maintaining he did all on his own initiation and in discharge of his duty towards his nation and only prayed to be allowed to be hanged and embrace death in the cause of Indian Independence. The Judges too got deeply impressed. Ultimately when the sentence of death was passed he thanked the Judges and said. " As a Hindu it is my earnest prayer that I may be born again in Hindoos-than and die again in her cause, till the cause is successful, and she stands free to the glory of God and to the good of man."

The Indians in England observed a fast on the day of Dhingra's execution. They gathered round the jail, applied for permission that his dead body be handed over to them that they might burn it according to Hindu rites. This request too was not granted and his remains were buried in the jail precincts.

Now a whole troop of detectives and police was let loose on the Indians in London. Almost every second man was marked out and watched. The India House was the special victim. The whole street was dotted by detectives. They would dog the steps of every Indian who passed by and scare him away. But Savarkar and his band con-

tinued their work unperturbed. When one of the press representatives asked him if he did not feel annoyed by his ever being shadowed, he smiled and said: 'I have no objection to their standing there in the open just in front of my door as they do, if the climate suited them.' It was really pitiable to see the poor fellows standing and leaning against the short pillar all day long in sun and shower in fog and mist and snow. At last this shadowing and secret annoyance reached such a stage that the Indian youths found it very difficult even to secure a lodging. The houses and hostels liked not to be watched as ill-reputed haunts which fate befell them if they harboured Indians. The marked and prominent revolutionists could not find a lodge, could not enter respectable restaurants, could not find company. Their relatives and their parents from home denounced them. Some of them got stranded. They lived in constant fear of arrest. The India House was ultimately stopped as it enabled the Police to watch the centre of the Revolutionists all the more easily and in a group. But, as Mr. Savarkar said, the India House was closed not before it had done its work of propaganda: for every room where an Indian youth stayed was turned into an India House.

And indeed the closing of the house did not close the chapter of revolutionary agitation in London. The youths conducted their secret meetings and all other activities in the most dogged and daring fashion every night as usual they

stood up and solemnly repeated their political catechism.

"India must be independent: India must be united: India must be republican: India must have one common tongue. India must have one common Script: that script was Nagari: that language was Hindi: that republic was that national form of Government in which the sovereign power—whether it be exercised by a monarch or by a President, matters not much—rested ultimately and uncompromisedly in the hands of the Indian people. Here it may be mentioned in passing that the notions of the leaders of Abhinava Bharat about the future constitution of India were very eloquently stated in a pamphlet headed "Choose Oh Indian Princes", which too was reputed to come from the pen of Mr. Savarkar and long extracts from which appear in Valentine Chirols ' works. Savarkar ever said: "Before you destroy you must know what and how you are going to construct". He himself was a close student of constitutional and political science and law.

While these events were happening in England the Government in India was carrying on a relentless persecution of the circle of Mr. Savarkar's family and friends. His father-in-law who was a Karbhari of the Javar State was dismissed, several other relations prosecuted, made to loose their services, dogged and shadowed at every step, for merely being related or connected with the Savarkars. Not only that when a Bomb was thrown at Lord Minto

at Ahmedabad, his youngest brother a boy of some 17 years—was held in custody as a suspect and was taken from town to town to extract some confession from him. He had already been arrested before in connection with a riot. Now none remained at home but the young sister-in-law of Mr. Savarkar, as his elder brother was transported for life, he was an exile in England and the youngest was held in custody under so serious a charge as an attempt at the assassination of the Viceroy—Lord Minto.

These harrowing news coming in quick successsion from home joined to the breathless activity he was carrying on in England could not but tell seriously on the health of Mr. Savarkar. To make the matters worse, the constant danger of being arrested as well as the annoyance of being shadowed all the hours of day and night which made it impossible for him even to find a room where he could snatch a few hours at undisturbed sleep, strained his sustaining power to the point of a physical collapse. Once after being turned out from two lodges in a day by the owners under pressure of the Police, Mr. Savarkar had just secured a third, late in the evening, and tired out was on the point of laying him down on an easy chair—the keeper of that boarding house returned, apologised and informed Mr. Savarkar that he could not board him there any longer as the detectives had already posted themselves of the street corners in and front and as consequently his other boarders were in a panic. Late in night once more Mr. Savarkar had

to pack up his meagre belongings, and leave this house and wander on in search for a new one. At last a German lady accepted him for a boarder. This solitary incident is cited to show what untold hardships these youths had to face in a foreign land; for this incident was only one out of hundred humiliations they had to undergo every day. Later on, Mr. Savarkar, weighed down with care, left London for Brighton and stayed there for a few weeks. It was there that sitting by the sea-beach, overborne with home-sickness, abandoned and deserted and shunned by all, his soul burst into that pathetic poem "Take me Oh ocean! Take me back to those my native shores!" These moving verses are now on the lips of all Maharashtra. "I long, I pine for those native shores! Take me Oh ocean to those my native shores!"

CHAPTER V

The storm bursts

"Behold! We enter this sacrificial fire to-day
The first instalment of our debt of love we pay!"

Savarkar

The excessive strain that was taxing the physical capacity of Mr. Savarkar at last broke down his health. He was attacked by high fever which developed into accute bronchitis. His devoted friends and followers nursed him more tenderly than a mother would do and ultimately on medical advice removed him to a sanitorium under the charge of an efficient Indian Doctor in Wells. There

even while he was confined to bed he lay not idle. He began his work on the History of Sikhs and wrote articles for the *Talwar* and other revolutionist papers. A passage from the opening article of the *Talwar* is worth quoting here as it throws a flood of light on the revolutionist mentality. "We feel no special love for secret organisations or surprise and secret warfare. We hold that whenever the open preaching and practising of truth is banned by enthroned violence, then alone secret societies and secret warfare are justified as an inevitable and indispensable means to combat violence by force. Wherever the natural process of national and political evolution is violently suppressed by the forces of wrong, then revolution must step in as a natural reaction and therefore ought to be welcomed as the only effective instrument to re-enthrone Truth and Right. But otherwise where constitutional means that enable a people to rule themselves as suits their rightful interests best, are within reach as now in the case of England or France or America, there any attempt at secret revolutionary organisation and activity and war should be held condemnable and must not be resorted to. As soon as such a peaceful and constitutional path is thrown open to us in our nation that would lead to the destined goal of our people, we would be the first to set our face sternly against all secret revolutionary agitation. India must be Independent : how devoutly we wish that we could arrive to that consummation by peaceful

and constitutional ways alone. But your violence has rendered it impossible. You rule by bayonets and under these circumstances it is mockery to talk of constitutional agitation where no constitution exists at all. But it would be worse than a mockery, even a crime, to talk of revolution when there is a constitution that allows the fullest and freest development of a nation. Only because you deny us a gun and we pick up a pistol. Only because you deny us light that we gather in darkness to compass means to knock out the fetters that hold our mother down''.

However specious and unballanced or otherwise this line of reasoning may be, it explains faithfully the working of the revolutionary mind.

Within a fortnight of his going to Wells, one evening he retired to his bed rather early as the doctor would not allow him to continue to undergo the strain of long conversation. Just then he picked up a evening paper to have a stray look at the latest news. There to his surprise he found this tele. graphic message :—"Ananta Kanhere, a chitpavan Brahman youth shot the Collector of Nasik to avenge the sentence of transportation passed on Ganesh Damodar Savarkar."

Next morning an editor of a well-known English Weekly who was also staying in that sanitorium handed another piece of news to Mr. Savarkar which informed him that several of his friends in Nasik as well as his youngest brother Narayan were arrested under charges of murder, conspiracy and waging of war.

That youngst brother was the same boy of 17 or 18 years of age who had been held in custody and was strongly suspected of throwing the bomb at the Viceroy. He had only a couple of days before been released as nothing could be found to substantiate his complicity with the bomb outrage and arrived at Nasik. He met his lonely sister-in-law to her great delight, passed a day with her and, before another morn rose, was faced again by the dreadful spectacle of an armed police party with a warrant to arrest him. He was snatched away. The distressed girl was once more left alone and unbefriended in this wide world.

The news of this latest assassination found the English and the Indian press simply mad with rage. The rabid but influential dailies openly demanded that the man at the bottom of all this nefarious revolutionary activity should immediately be made to pay the penalty of all these crimes. Everyone knew who was hinted at. But some papers going further actually mentioned Savarkar as the man and wanted to know why he was still free. Savarkar's friends and followers naturally got alarmed at this outburst of English fury and pressed Savarkar to leave England and cross over to France. The leaders in Paris too wired to him to leave England at once. Savarkar refused to budge an inch. At last the Executive Council of the Abhinava Bharat informed him in a formal way that, as his safety and health were most essential for the progress of the great cause they all had at

heart, they most pressingly requested him to go over to Paris forthwith. They sent a gentleman to accompany Mr. Savarkar to France. Ill, harrassed, unwilling to leave his comrades and friends behind in the thick of the fight, Savarkar came down to London and was heartily welcomed there by the society. A secret meeting was convened in his honour. Most glowing and most affectionate tributes were paid by the leaders to him for his marvellous activities and sacrifice and sincerity and a hundred and one qualities of head and heart that enabled him at so early an age—for he was then 25—to transform the world of easy-going dandies that the Indian students in England generally were, into a powerful band of self-sacrificing youths dedicated to a great cause, who by their reckless daring and sincerity had become a terror that seriously disturbed the rest of two Governments—the English as well as the Indian.

This was the last meeting of the Abhinava Bharat that Savarkar attended in England. He took leave of them all with a heavy heart and parted as keenly feeling the separation of his friends then, as he had done at the time he left his family at Nasik on the eve of his departure for England.

He was enthusiastically welcomed at Paris by all those Indians there. His presence there naturally shifted the centre of revolutionary activity from London to Paris. There he stayed with that famous Parsi lady Madame Cama. She was an old worker in the Indian cause. She had done yeoman

work at the time of Dadabhai's election for a seat in the Parliament. She thereupon got slowly disappointed of the moderate school of politics and joined the Home Rule League. She delivered several lectures in America and avowed her belief in a peaceful revolution in India. But the high-handedness of the Curzonian days and the rise of the revolutionary school led by Mr. Savarkar in London soon confirmed that patriotic lady in revolutionary tenets. She soon threw herself heart and soul into the movement and did all she could to advertise the cause of Indian Independence in Europe. Once while she was in Germany there was a meeting of the German Socialists to take place. She was invited there. She took with her a beautifully designed tricoloured flag of the party of Indian Independence. The meeting cordially pressed her to speak on Indian questions. She rose. Every one was struck by the picturesque Indian *Sadi* she wore, the noble and commanding countenance she bore, the spirited soul that informed all her movements. "She is an Indian Princess!" The gazing crowds muttered. She began to speak and after a few remarkable sentences suddenly took out that little flag designed for Abhinava Bharat, unfurled it and waving it enthusiastically aloft said : "This is the flag of Indian Independence. Behold, it is born! It is already sanctified by the blood of martyred Indian youths. I call upon you gentlemen to rise and salute this flag of India—of Indian Independence."

This was doubtless the first occasion on which an Indian dared to publicly unfurl a flag of national Independence. Nothing could have emphasised the national idea behind that Indian flag than the curious fact that it was a Parsi and a lady who thus unfurled it before the eyes of the world.

For the first few weeks Mr. Savarkar busied himself in organising Indians in Paris and infusing a new life into that small but influential colony of Indians. But when the work there was over he began to feel ill at ease to live there couped up. In England new Indian youths poured in by every steamer and so the propagandist work was ever on the increase. In addition to this feeling of having one's energy circumscribed and cabined for want of larger opportunities in Paris, every mail brought distressing news about the development of the Nasik trial regarding the assassination of the Collector. In the course of the trial dreadful statements and revelations were made by the accused as to the harrowing tortures they were subjected to by the Police which were emphatically denied by the latter. Savarkar had his friends and old comrades and his youngest brother amongst the accused. The stories of untold sufferings of them all naturally told very seriously on his mind. They who had been standing by him through thick and thin throughout his life, his chums and bosom friends and brothers and beloved disciples—while they were now facing such formidable sufferings for actions and ideals which he in the main had goaded

them on to, should he leave them now to rot in dungeons and face the gallows and keep himself at a safe distance in the gay Capital of France! Was it manly!

This was the momentous question that faced the conscientious youth.

But on the other hand, was it not his duty to spare himself if but thereby he could serve the cause of Indian Independence better than by a rash sacrifice of his life which was surely bound to be the case if he deliberately stepped in India inspite of the most reliable information that he would be arrested as soon as he touched the Indian shores? His most trusted friend pressed him thus. Mr. Shamji told him: "You are a general and must not rush to the firing line with the rank." But the noble and brave youth, at times as sensitive as a girl, seemed to feel the compliment to him derogatory to those who were in the firing line and replied: 'But it is only by fighting first by their side in the firing line that I can prove my worth of being exalted to the position of a general: otherwise every one would think himself, by a deceptive notion of one's self-importance to be as indispensable, as a general and thus claim to remain at the Headquarters. Then who would fight? Will not, moreover, this kind of argument serve the cowards as a handy shield to hide their fear?"

True it was that his going directly to India was doubtless a folly, as that would only serve the ends of the foe, for it was admitted by every one,

even by the enemies, that he would be arrested as soon as he landed in India. But this was not the case so far as England was, concerned. People, even some of the revolutionists, had till then a belief that the English law would not tolerate the extradition of any person for purely political charges. The old tradition and usual boasts of the British writers that as soon as slaves touched British waters their fetters dropped. That Orsini, the Italian revolutionist who shot at Napoleon III, as well as a host of Russian, French, Chinese, and other revolutionists ever found England a place of refuge, made Indians generally feel that even if arrested Savarkar were tried by the British Court the want of direct evidence was likely to defeat the Government in its purpose of crushing him altogether. There was also nothing definite to prove as conclusively as in the case of the Indian Government that the English Government had issued any warrant to arrest him or even meant to do that. Even after Curzon Wyllie's assassination, Mr. Savarkar was left free, for no evidence powerful enough to convict him came forth. The new incident of Jackson's assassination could not make matters very seriously worse as he was actually in England when the event took place at Nasik, and nothing showed that he had any connection with Mr. Kanhere, who was quite unknown to him. Then, if inspite of this all he persisted in leaving his guns in England and seek safety in Paris only on the strength of a suspi-

cion of being arrested, would not that serve others also as a sufficient excuse to run away to a safer land and get panic-struck? Then who would work in England—that extremely fruitful field for revolutionary propaganda? and if no one of those leaders who remained there crossed the channel out of an imaginary or merely probable fear of arrest, what right Mr. Savarkar would have to blame them or order them to remain steady at their posts facing a danger from which he was the first to run away?

The spirited youth could not tolerate this false position he was placed in. Work he must have. If not in India, he would go to England to resume it. That would stop demoralization of the revolutionists in England—for some of his co-workers were actually thinking of leaving London for the continent as he had done—he would not lay himself open to the charge of living in ease and comfort and away from the danger zone while his chums and brothers were undergoing fearful miseries in cells and dungeons in India, and if at all arrested in England he would be able to advertise the cause of Indian Independence all over the world far more effectively than even the trial of Dingra could do.

Reasoning thus but still hesitating to take the last fatal step, he, on a fine morning, went out for a walk to take fresh and open air as the doctors advised him regularly to do to guard him from any further bronchial troubles. It was a sunny morn—the skies were clear, the beautiful roads so

shady, so hospitable, so reviving, were dotted here and there by small ponds where the swans, and other water birds gaily quacked and cackled, and the water lilies bloomed. There Mr. Savarkar lay reclined on the lawn for a while. Then he took up an Indian paper and looked through the news column. There he found that the first trial of the Abhinava Bharatists of Nasik was over and Mr. Karve and others were sentenced to death. He scanned the names again to find if his younger brother was one of them ; was surprised to find his name omitted. He got up. The swan still quacked and cackled gaily at his feet ; the water lilies gracefully danced in the morning breeze, the air was refreshing.

'But,' as a sudden voice as if audibly demanded in a censorious tone—but what about them who are standing even now under the shadow of the gallows in India ? Wouldst thou continue to enjoy these morning walks and this fresh air and the sight of these beautiful water lilies and gay swans; while thy followers and friends and brothers are rotting in cells deprived of light and food, fettered and forced to bear untold hardships—canst thou enjoy this all ? The contrast was too grim! The sensitive youth shrank within himself at its sight and felt himself as a sinner if he continued any longer to lie idly touring in the luxurious parks of Paris. "I must have work! If not to India I must go to England. I must risk even as my followers have done and show that I cannot merely sacrifice

but even suffer. If I get arrested well that would be the real test of my mettle, I have bragged of being pledged to face imprisonments, exiles, tortures, death in the cause of the Independence of my Motherland. Now is the time to test myself if I could bear a part of these calamities and still stand unmoved and faithful to my Faith. Youngsters who took lessons at my feet have braved the gallows and kept their pledge of fighting even unto death; should their trusted teacher and guide and friend and philosopher keep running away from shore to shore and leave them all in the lurch shielding myself behind the demoralizing and spacious reasoning of saving myself to work greater wonders? The first great wonder that I must work is to prove my capacity and ability to work wonders by standing by my guns and if the worst comes to the worst face arrests and tortures and still stand unshaken and immoveable and if possible try to frustrate the foes by effecting my release or stay out all their tortures and threats or in the end die fighting. If I survive in spite of risking and come out unscathed from the ordeal then I might hold myself justly entitled to spare me as a general without the least danger of demoralizing either myself or my followers. Well if I don't survive I shall have kept my word, my pledge of striving to free India even unto death and leave a glorious example of martyrdom which in these days of mendacity and cringing political slavery is the one thing wanted to fire the blood of my people and to rouse and

enthuse them to great deeds. A great martyrdom: some grand example of utter sacrifice and willing suffering: and India is saved. No amount of cowardly tactics in the name of work can whip her back into life. I will risk, will suffer, will myself pay the highest price—then alone I shall have right to exhort others to risk and suffer and pay."

Caught up in this furious mental storm Mr. Savarkar scarcely knew how he reached his lodgings. He summoned his friends, threw the piece of the news before them, argued in the above strain and though he could not convince them yet succeeded in silencing their opposition. To furnish the last goading touch there came a couple of letters from his trusted friends one of them from no less a person than Mr. V. V. S. Aiyer, the Vice-President of Abhinava Bharat, from London in which he wrote; he expected Mr. Savarkar back to London within a month or so. Mr. Savarkar decided to go. A hearty and loving send-off was given to him by the Indians in Paris where he had won for himself not only the admiration and trust of followers but the personal affection of almost every one of them. Most jarring elements fell in a line and became fitted in a harmonious whole at his touch. Every one who came in contact with him, even the English detectives and the editors of papers that most virulently attacked his work could not but admire and used to feel a sort of personal attachment to him.

At last the fatal step was taken. Nodding acknowledgment and appreciation of the most

cordial and loving farewell waved on to him by the Indians on the station frantically flying their handkerchiefs and banners and tiny flags till the train that took him away from them was within sight. Mr. Savarkar left Paris, left France and boarded the steamer that was to recross the channel. Turning towards his companion he remarked : behold I take this step with a full knowledge that I shall in all probability be arrested one of these days. "But then ?" inquired his companion. "Then I shall try my best to prove to myself that I can suffer as well as work. Uptil now I have worked to the utmost of my capacity, now I will suffer to its utmost. For suffering is under our present circumstances bound to be far more fruitful than mere work. In fact reasoned suffering is work: only subtle because intense.

He landed on the English soil. He took a train to London. Although he expected arrest sometime or the other in England he did not expect it there and then. But as the train neared London he found himself more closely watched than was usual. The train stopped. He peeped out of the compartment—windows just before alighting down and to his surprise found a troop of detectives in plain clothes rushing towards his carriage and shouting ! There's he, there's he ! that is, Savarkar ! He stepped down on the platform and they fell on him : he resisted and demanded who they were and if they had a warrant to arrest him. They held him fast and rudely handling informed him that he would

know all, a little later on in the waiting room : there the warrant was read out and he was formally taken in custody.

The news of this dramatic arrest spread like wild fire throughout London. That night he slept in the Police lock-up. He said to himself : " There ! you are called upon to face that terrible fate which when it befell others, you deemed as a fortunate reward of their labours and a test of their patriotic worth and sincerity. Well, face it now as behoves a brave man." And strange to say he felt quite relieved at the thought that after all he had risked and no longer even his worst enemies could attribute to him any cowardly designs, to shirk from dangers which he goaded others to face. He soundly slept. Only the horrible cold of the stony walls of the English lock-up and want of warm covering disturbed him once or twice.

We have mentioned time and again in this sketch that ours is not the task of justifying or condemning any of Mr. Savarkar's opinions or actions here. Here we are concerned merely to relate what actually took place, and so leaving the readers to form their own opinions as to the expediency of the step Mr. Savarkar took in recrossing the channel we hasten on to narrate the culminating episodes of this romantic story.

Next day after his arrest he was produced before the Magistrate. The Court was packed with spectators. As soon as Mr. Savarkar was escorted into the prisoner's dock, the crowd burst into cheers.

He was charged and remanded and sent to the Brixton Jail.

The limits of this sketch do not allow us to recite the details of his life in that prison, nor of the case for his extradition, nor of the daring conspiracies to effect his rescue which some of his followers meditated, nor how the Irish and French and German people and in fact all Europe and America watched the developments of the case and on account of it came to take a keen interest in Indian political struggle; or how the Portuguese, the Chinese, and Egyptians and Irish and other papers wrote warm and appreciative articles on Savarkar's life and doings and the cause of Indian Freedom. Enough to say that the English Courts ordered his extradition to India and an appeal to the Privy Council failed to upset it. The brave band of Indian Revolutionaries stood firm and daily interviewed Mr. Savarkar in the jail, raised funds to conduct his case and rendered all assistance they could to lighten his imprisonment.

When all this show was over and Mr. Savarkar was soon going to be extradited, he managed to smuggle to India a letter to inform his sister-in-law of all that had happened. He deliberately titled it as his last will and testament. For he knew that going to India to be tried meant either death or transportation for life. No other alternative was possible. So then that was perhaps going to be the last letter in which he could plainly deliver the message to his sister-in-law who only the year be-

fore had to bear the shock of her husband's being transported for life, then his youngest brother whom she brought up as her child was snatched away from her and now Vinayak for whose return to India she was anxiously looking forth, was to inform her that he too was arrested, was standing at the foot of the gallows and was in no case ever to meet her again. The following free translation of that last letter will show how Mr. Savarkar acquitted himself of this most excruciating and painful duty :—

My will and testament

I

It was the month of Vaishakh : The sky above and the terrace underneath were washed and quivered in the delightful moonlight. The dear little creeper of jai, daily fondly watered by Bal blushed and bloomed in fragrant flowers.

They were the days of summer vacation and friends and comrades, all the dear and near ones had gathered under our roof. Fame waited upon that noble band of youths and chivalry surrounded them with a halo of transparent purity and young brilliance.

Their hearts were welling up with fresh love and they breathed an atmosphere suffused with noble breezes of high aspirations and chivalrous resolves. Young and tender creepers cling there to noble and aspiring trees and the townsman lovingly called that grateful garden a "Dharmashala."

Thou served the meals; the dishes used to be juicy and inviting all the more for thy serving. The moon was delightful above and we all friends and families sat long, now musing, now lost in stirring and stimulating conversations.

Now we listen to the moving story of the Princely Exile of Ayodhya or of the stirring struggle that set Italy free. Now we sang the immortal exploits of Tanaji or of Chitore or of Baji and Bhau and Nana. The anxious analysis that with tearful eyes recounted the causes of the downfall of our distressed Mother; the keen and watchful synthesis that planned daring schemes of Her ultimate Deliverance; the ceaseless activity that laid bare the wounds of our Mother and stirred and roused and fired the imagination of hundred of highly mettled youths to high resolves:

Those happy days, that dear company, those moonlit nights, the romantic aspirations, the chivalrous resolves and above all that Divine Ideal that informed and inspired them all and made us take up our cross and follow it!:—

Dost thou remember it all? Dost thou remember the stern vows and consecrating oaths mutually administered and the hundreds of noble youths initiated into the ranks of His Forces? The youths pledging themselves to fight and fall as Baji fell, the young girls to watch, enthuse and die as the girls of Chitore died?

Nor was it blindness that goaded us on to that Faith! No! We entered in it under the full blaze

of the searching light of Logic and History and Human Nature knowing full well that those who would have life must lose it, we took up our cross and deliberately followed Him !

Having first called to the mind those consecrating oaths and stern vows so solemnly taken by us with that band of dear comrades and, chums, cast thou an eye on the Present ! Not even a dozen years have rolled by : and yet so much is already accomplished ! cheerful indeed is the outlook !

II

The whole country is roused throughout its length and breadth ! She has cast off the beggar's bowl and put Her hand on the hilt of Her sword ! Stern worshipers are pouring in their thousands into His Temple and the sacrificial Fire too has begun to rise in angry leaping flames on His alter.

The test has come, oh ye ! who have taken the stern vows and pledged your solemn words to see the sacrifice accomplished : Who is, say ! ready to fall the first victim and immolate himself in this roaring fire that Good may triumph over the forces of Evil ?

No sooner did Shree Rama challenge his votaries thus than did our family, Oh noble sister ! volunteer itself and pray 'Here are we Oh Lord ! Honour us by sacrificing us first in those blazing flames !'

We will work and die in defence of Righteousness. Thus had we pledged our words. Behold, we enter the flames ! We have kept our word !.

The stern vows we took to fight under Her banner in order to win Her Freedom back even at the cost of our lives have thus been fulfilled. What a relief! Blessed indeed are we that He should have given us strength to burn down the Self in us to ashes before our very eyes. We have served the cause and fighting fell. This was all we aimed at!

III

We dedicated to Thee our thoughts; our speech and eloquence we dedicated to Thee, Oh Mother! My lyre sang of Thee alone: My pen wrote of Thee alone, Oh Mother!

It was on Thy altar that I sacrificed my health and my wealth. Neither the longing looks of a young wife vainly waiting for my return, nor the peals of laughter of dear children, nor the helplessness of a sister-in-law stranded and left to starve, could hold me back at the call of Thy Trumpet!

My eldest brother—so brave, so sternly resolute, and yet so softly loving—was sacrificed on Thy altar. The youngest one—so dear, so young—he too followed him into the flames; and now here am I, Oh Mother! bound to Thy sacrificial Pillar! What of these! Had we been seven instead of only three brothers, I would have sacrificed them all—in Thy cause!

Thy cause is Holy! Thy cause I believed to be the cause of God! and in serving it I knew I served the Lord!

Thirty crores are Her children! Those amongst them who, possessed of this Divine rage, die in Her

cause shall ever live ! and our family tree, Oh sister! thus up-rooted, shall strike its roots deep and bloom immortally.

IV

And what even if it does not bloom and like all other mortal things withers and gets mixed up with the dust of oblivion ! We have fulfilled our pledges and striven suppressing self to secure the Triumph of Good over Evil. To us that is enough. To us sacrifice is success.

Whatever it pleased the Lord to bestow on us have we consecrated to Thee to-day ! and if ever it pleases Him to bestow on us aught else, that too would certainly be laid at Thy feet alone !

Scanning thus Thy thoughts, discriminating thus, continue, dear Vahini, to uphold the traditions of our family and stand faithfully by the cause. The divine Uma practising sēvere austerities in the snow-clad Himalayas : the girls of Chittoor, with young smiles playing on their lips, mounting blazing flames—These are Thy ideals ! Thou art a hero's better half ! be Thy life as supremely heroic as to prove that that radiant courage and spirit's strength which the weaker sex of Hind displayed, are not yet dimmed or diminished.

This is my last word to Theé, my will and my testament. Good-bye, dear Vahini, Good-bye. Convey my best love to my wife and this :

That it was certainly not blindness that goaded us on to this Path ! No! We entered on it under the full blaze of the searching light of Logic and His-

tory and Human Nature; knowing full well that a Pilgrim's progress leads through the valley of Death, we took up Our Cross and deliberately followed Him!

CHAPTER VI

Marseilles

The day when Mr. Savarkar was to be extradited and sail for India to the intense grief and anxiety of his friends and comrades in arms, he received most touching letters from several Indians as well as European gentlemen. In response he wrote the following letter and managed through a private source to send it out to France from his prison on the eve of his extradition in 1910.

"Whose heart to heart by silken ties is knit of friendship sweet, that sweeter grows by far partaking of the Godly sacrament of mother's creed Divine: Oh friends! Farewell! as tender and fresh as the morning dew that wakes the fragrance! friends, adieu! adieu!

"We part to play our God-appointed parts now pent and nailed to burning Rocks; now tossed on surging waves of Fame; now seen, now lost; or humble or exalted:—Wherever posted by the Lord of Hosts, yet posted best, as if that alone was the mission of our life, thus there to act!

"As in some oriental play sublime, all characters, the dead as well as the living, in Epilogue they

meet, thus actors we innumerable all—once more shall meet on History's copious stage before the great applauding audience of Humanity, that would with grateful cheer fill hill and dale! Till then, Oh loving friends, Farewell! Farewell!

"Wherever may my humble ashes lie: in the Andamans' sad brook whose weeping course adds to its dreariness a tongue or stored by Ganga's sacred crystal stream in which the stars their midnight measures dance:—They will be stirred with fire and glow when Victory's trumpet-blasts will proclaim: Sree Ram has crowned his chosen people's brow with laurels golden green! The Evil Spirit is cast away and chased back to the deep from whence it first arose! and lo! She lordly stands, Our Mother Ind, a beacon light Humanity to guide! Oh martyred saints and soldiers, do awake! The battle is won in which you fought and fell!

"Till then, Oh loving friends, Farewell! Farewell!

"Watch sleeplessly the progress of our Mother and learn to count it, not by so much work done or tried, but by how much they suffered, what sacrifice our people could sustain! For work is chance, but sacrifice a Law; foundation firm to rear a mighty Dome of Kingdoms new and great! but only great if their roots be in martyrs' ashes laid. Thus work for Mother's glory, till God's breath be rendered back, the Godly mission done—a martyr's wreath or victor's crown be won!"

The Police and the Government, in the meanwhile, were trying to solve the question of how to take this troublesome rebel youth back to India to be tried there. The usual way was to cross the Channel and through France take him to Marseilles and then sail for India. But there were rumours afloat that Mr. Shamji Krishnavarma, the influential leader of the revolutionists, was likely to move the French courts to issue a writ of *Habeas Corpus* if ever the English dared to take Savarkar through France under custody on political charges. To avoid any further complications it was at last decided to drop the usual route, sail directly from the English shores *via* the Bay of Biscay avoiding so far as possible any stoppage at foreign ports. Accordingly a strong escort, specially deputed from India, strengthened yet further by picked officers from the Scotland Yard, took charge of the famous revolutionist, boarded the ship and sailed through the Bay.

Mr. Savarkar, when he thus left England in 1910, was nearly 26. He had arrived there when 22 years old. Within the short span of these four years he had transformed the crowd of nerveless ninnies and unprincipled dandies, that the Indian students in England were before generally reputed to be, into a band of patriots who, apart from their dreadful methods and questionable tactics, did undoubtedly display a heroic fortitude, a reckless spirit of sacrifice in the interests of their motherland and did indeed win the esteem and en-

list the moral sympathy of all European nations in favour of the cause of Indian Freedom. Before that, the European actually expressed his contempt at the sight of an Indian as a slave, and worse, as a willing slave. Thenceforth, they looked upon them as men who could retaliate and dare and die for their nation.

No sooner was he taken on board the steamer than Mr. Savarkar began to devise plans of putting into practice the latter part of his programme which we saw him framing in Paris. He did not shirk, he risked, he was now in the very thick of the fight, not only side by side, but even at the front of all those comrades who stood braving prisons and gallows and tortures in India. If now he could effect his escape and regain his liberty—not by avoiding the foe as it would have been the case had he not faced him at all—but by defeating him, he could spare himself for further work without sowing the seeds of demoralization in the revolutionary party; but on the other hand, by frustrating the machinations of his foes, he would raise the revolutionist cause in the esteem of others and themselves. He knew that all sorts of rumours were being given credence in the English press as to the cause of his sudden and deliberate return to England from Paris. Some attributed it after the fashion of the celebrated Irish hero, Robert Emmet, to an interview he was to have with a girl that had fallen in love with him: others to economical difficulties. Mr. Shamji silenced many of these

conjectures by his letter in the *Times*. Nevertheless the Police sedulously went on encouraging the belief that Savarkar was duped by their clever tactics and fell a victim to a false letter they sent him in the name of his intimate friend. But nothing of that sort ever happened. We have Savarkar's word for that. The working of his heart is laid bare before us in the previous chapters and he voluntarily and deliberately recrossed the Channel. Now he thought, if by some extraordinary deed of clever daring he could effect his escape, these stupid boasts of the English police as to their ingenuity and smartness would be mortified as never before. Even while he was in Brixton serious schemes of effecting his rescue were under consideration. They all failed even though he had friends and money to back him up then. Now he was alone, pennyless, befriended by none, a prisoner under the closest and the most circumspective watch and ward of the English escort.

For the officers in charge of him were in no way unguarded. They knew he was a dangerous and reckless prisoner and backed up by a powerful and devoted party who would risk even their lives to effect his rescue. So they neglected no precaution and kept him under the most rigorous isolation and watch.

There is no space here, nor do we know enough, to describe how cleverly he devised his plan, how every now and then he was disappointed, how everything seemed to go against him. Why, it looked

on the very face of it childish to escape from the steamer, where ten picked and armed officers and men and hundreds of European passengers guarded him, and when he could not even exchange a word or stand a minute by the side of any other passenger or alone. These details would come to light only when Mr. Savarkar himself chooses to tell his story.

The steamer, it was given out, was not to touch Marseilles. But somehow or other it suddenly changed its course, when past Gibralter, toward the French port. A faint hope rose in the mind of the prisoner that some of his friends in Paris might come to his rescue, at least afford some help. The steamer anchored at Marseilles—but no one could be discovered as far as his strained eyes could descry. The only change was a change for the worse. His guard would not allow him to move away from them anywhere even for a minute and kept annoyingly close by him. Only at the time of the bath or the closet they allowed him to go alone—but even there they managed to watch him by a big reflex glass that was kept hanging outside the rooms. Even then twice he tried to scale out by night, but twice he was thwarted in his attempt, though none knew it but himself.

The night passed away. It was about to dawn. Within a few hours of daybreak the steamer would leave the port. The last chance of his escape would slip out of his hand. But what to do! Both the English officers were asleep, the sepoys keeping

awake and amidst these sleeplessly watched, Mr. Savarkar slept all huddled together in that small cabin of a steamer. Mr. Savarkar had weighed all the consequences of an attempt to escape in his mind. He knew that failure was almost certain under the most unfavourable and hostile circumstances : with not a soul to sympathise or help, and with hundreds of foreigners keeping strict watch on his movement, how on earth was he to shake off the armed guards at his heels and sides? and if failure was almost certain how terrible would be the consequences! He had read harrowing accounts of the cruelty that these very officers were capable of when in their calmer moods. To what demoniacal fury and tortures would they not subject him if thus they got exasperated by his attempt to break off from their custody? Then any such attempt was bound to lay him open to far more serious charges and was bound to prejudice his first case in a most damaging way. For as the case stood there could have been no substantial documentary or other reliable evidence strong enough to sustain all the charges against Mr. Savarkar, so cleverly had he worked throughout that otherwise reckless agitation. Even the best legal opinions, in spite of the confessions of his former comrades that were wrung out by the Police in India, were one on the point that if he chose to defend and if no further complications took place he could not get more than 7 years or so in any ordinary conducted trial. But an attempt at such daring

escape would doubtless furnish that much dreaded complication. Yes: true it was that thus the price of failure would be most exacting.

But if it succeeds? Succeeds even partially? What grand tradition of heroic fortitude would it not leave behind to raise the prestige of the Indian revolutionist party in the esteem of all mankind? It will take Europe by surprise. It will wash away the stigma that the leader of Abhinava Bharat was trapped by the Government as easily as one would trap a mouse. No! his arrest must cost them much more than the arrest of any single private individual had ever done. It must tax the utmost ingenuity of the English Government and force them to stand mortified and humiliated before all Europe. If no help, well, he would individually do it at any rate. It was worth risking, worth doing. Failure or success, he will have the satisfaction of having played his own part well and fought to the last in the cause of Indian Independence. But if, in pursuit and hunt, they shoot? Well, it would be far more in keeping with his position as the President of the Abhinava Bhaart, the leader of Young India, to die in that fashion, to get shot in the struggle than to live to rot in the Andamanese dungeons or end his life on the gallows.

He must risk.

But the steamer was to sail just after daybreak. These guards are all closing and tightly pressing on both sides. Still, if at all, this is the time. Now or never!

He actually repeated to his mind 'Now or never!' He turned to the guards and in his usual smiling and pleasant way persuasively asked if they would take him to the closet. The guards assented. But to his surprise they wanted to wake up the chief officer. He woke and, to the embarrassment of Mr. Savarkar, accompanied him to the closet with the guards. The door of the water closet was set up with a glass pane. A looking glass just opposite to it was kept hanging outside in which all movements inside the closet were reflected. There the guard stood watching, though outwardly he had turned his back to the closet. Mr. Savarkar knew it all. He entered the closet. There he saw the port-hole at the top a little opened. But how to reach it? The guard was there. Mr. Savarkar had a dressing gown on him over his sleeping suit. He sharply took it out and threw it on the hook against the pane. That sheltered him a little. He jumped, but failed to reach the port-hole. A curious misgiving and fear of the ridicule he would lay himself open to in case he was now caught there and then disspirited him a bit. But in the twinkling of an eye he came to himself once more, censoriously repeated to his mind, 'Now or never!' and clambered up again.

This time the guard marked this queer movement, looked back, but before he could understand what he saw, Mr. Savarkar had caught the edge of the port-hole: he was in it. The guard shouted 'Treachery!' Mr. Savarkar surveyed the sea. The

guard panic-struck rushed at the door of the closet closed from inside by Savarkar and began to kick at the pane and shout and howl. Mr. Savarkar had managed to slip half his body out of the port-hole and jumped into the sea. The guards broke the door, a crowd rushed, they reached the port-hole. Mr. Savarkar heard a pistol shot, thought they were shooting at him and dived under the water. The guards saw him, but dared not to jump down out of the same port-hole at his heels. They returned and raised the alarm on the steamer and a number of persons including some officers of the steamer threw the drawbridge and landed on the shore. In the meanwhile, Mr. Savarkar was swimming for his very life, now diving, now riding the waves. He reached the shore first, but to his dismay found a steep dock-wall facing him. Nevertheless he touched the wall with a view to secure the protection of the French law; for the touching of the dock-wall was tantamount in law to landing on the soil.

He touched the French coast and then finding a great uproar was raised behind him he began to scale the steep dockyards. The discipline of the secret societies in Nasik required members to scale steep rocks and according to that rule Mr. Savarkar too used to train himself to it in his boyhood. That practice now saved his life. Once he slipped and fell in the sea; but at the second venture he succeeded in reaching the top, actually landed on the French soil and knew that then he was a free man

This consciousness of having at last shaken off the fetters of his powerful foe and the consequent feeling of exaltation almost relieved him of the exhaustion that the strain of all this sensation had brought on him. He stood a couple of seconds, breathed the air, knew it was free air that he was breathing and actually felt it exceptionally fresh and sweet. The stirring stories of the escape of the Russian revolutionist rushed to his memory and sustained him in his determination by assuring him that he too was acting an equally heroic part.

All this did not take a minute: just then the chase was on him! He looked back, found a number of excited men and officers shouting and raising a cry "catch thief—catch thief!" were running after him from three sides so as to completely surround him. Their attitude showed him that it was no longer safe to depend upon mere legal technicalities. They did not seem to be the men who would honor the French Law for the mere asking of it. He must fight to the last and seek the protection of the French Police to save himself from the rowdy voilence of his pursuers. So instantly he galloped off. He was exhausted by the swimming and the scaling and the nervous strain of the marvellous venture. But he ran on. Not less than a mile the hunt continued. The tram cars were running up and down, he passed them by. But he had not a pie on him. Otherwise he would have jumped in one of them, while his pursuers were yards away from him and in a few minutes would have shaken

them off. Nor could he espy the face of any of his Indian friends who could lend him a helping hand by calling in the French Police to his rescue! If but any one would lend him a penny!—he might jump in the tram cars and vanish off in a minute.

A penny! a penny! His life for a penny!!

But who was going to pay him there a penny, where thousands of miles away from his people and his Motherland the brave Indian Youth, was being hunted like a wild beast by the armed crowd of foreigners for the heinous crime he had committed to free his nation! The French people—a lot of workers were passing in groups to their daily calling. They heard the cry "catch thief," "catch thief!" saw a young, poorly clad West Indian—must be some lascar from the steamer trying to scamper off and pursued by English officers who bore gold and silver stripes and badges, and instinctively took the side of the latter and joined in the chase. Still the brave youth gave not in. He continued the race at top-speed, loudly calling out "Police, Police!" for he knew that the only best thing he could do under the circumstances was to deliver himself up to some French official before the crowd that was raised on all sides eventually closed on him and the English kidnapped him without allowing any formal complaint to reach the French authorities. Just then he descried a French gendarme—a French policeman to his great relief. He walked up to the policeman, informed him in broken French that he was not a thief but an Indian

political prisoner whom the English were trying to arrest on French soil and demanded that, as he was free no sooner he touched the French coast, he had a right to claim the protection of the French Government. 'Take me before a Magistrate!' he kept insisting on. But the ordinary policeman could not make out anything of these learned claims, was naturally inclined to listen to the high English officials and gentlemen, and at last, when the most powerful argument that could influence a poor street police like him was supplied by them in the form of a heap of glittering golden coins, whatever misgivings he had disappeared and he handed over Mr. Savarkar to the English authorities. But he was not likely to go back for mere asking. He kept furiously resisting till overpowered, and held fast by dozens of men. He was almost dragged on to the steamer. There one of the guards suddenly dealt a blow from behind on his head. Lightning-like he got him extricated from those who held him and fell on the man remidinng him that come what might he was not likely to be killed before he knocked at least one of them down dead. That fury put a stop to all further assaults. The crowd dispersed. Mr. Savarkar was once more locked in the cabin.

He was utterly exhausted. His breath grew heavy. It seemed as if the bronchcial trouble would reappear. The failure naturally began to tax his nerves. It seemed as if demoralization would set in. The English officials kept vowing vengeance against him for the troubles he had put them to.

The boat sailed. All hope of escape was lost. The night came. His guards that night had a sword unsheathed and hung before his seat in the cabin. He was handcuffed day and night; even at the water closet the guards accompanied him holding him tightly by their hands on both sides. In that little cabin he was to remain all time. Only a four feet of space was allowed to him to stand, to move and to take his walk, the electric light was constantly kept burning, making the crowded cabin intolerably heated and close. Sunlight too became a luxury and he could not see it for days and days. To make matters worse some of the furious guards and officers who had lost their temper did not scruple to use foul language and hold terrible threats of tortures hanging on his head. As night came on, the passengers in the cabins leaving in that corridor began to shift and that part of the steamer was vacated thus showing that perhaps the threats of physical assaults held out by some of the policemen were very likely to come out true. "Prepare thyself now to face the worst that befalls a victim!" said Mr. Savarkar to himself and kept devising what he could do if they actually tortured him. He must bear it all. Doubtless the attempt at escape had made his position immensely more miserable than ever. But then he had tried his best and did all that a brave man ought to have done and could have done. "Do Thy duty and leave the rest to God."

These lines kept automatically rising to his mind. The sword was hanging naked before his eyes just within a hand's distance where the sentry sat. He had moreover observed that a loaded revolver was in the trouser pocket of one of the officials and he had hung those trousers when going to bed on the hook opposite to him. All night he kept deliberately awake, though with close eyes. Once the officer in charge kept gazing steadily at the face of the dozing prisoner and suddenly ejaculated, "What a breed these Savarkars are!" "Kya awalad hai!" Savarkar heard it, but replied not. Only he opened his eyes and steadily gazed at the officer. Construing his silence as a sign of Mr. Savarkar's getting cowed down, the official naturally vented out his fury and threatened Savarkar in the foulest terms with physical tortures. At this, Mr. Savarkar got up and solemnly replied "Look here: you talk of tortures. Now the day when I raised what you call a revolt I first set my own house on fire and then began setting fire to those of my neighbours. I am now dead to myself while living. Desperate recklessness is now my only friend. But your case is quite otherwise. You have yet to live and enjoy the pleasures of a sweet home. Therefore think twice before you subject me to any such foul treatment or tortures. For I know I cannot defend myself against you all. But one thing I will do. I will not die unless and until I have killed at least one of you." Nor were these words of Mr. Savarkar a mere brag. He had resolved to snatch

down that pair of trousers that one of the officers had hung by the hook, take out the revolver it contained and fall on the assailants at a bound at the slighest attempt on their part to put the threats of torture into practice.

There was something so stern and overpowering in those accents that fell from Savarkar's lips, and in the very fact that they fell from Savarkar's lips, that the official and the guards by his side could not help being impressed and felt as if disarmed. In a much milder tone the official continued: "No, no; I am not given to use foul language and you need not fear on that score. You see how polite have I been to you throughout these days. But was it not ungrateful on your part to put me in this terrible fix now? You have thus snatched away the morsel of food from the mouth of my wife and children by making me loose my job. It was under this excitement that a few angry and foul words escaped my lips." Savarkar said: "To a certain extent you are right. But you see have I not, just like you, wife and family to love? Then did the consideration as to the pitiable plight in which they would find themselves by my arrest deter you from receiving a warrant against me and undertaking to execute it and drag me on cuffed and helpless to the scaffold? True you have been polite to me, but I too never played the rowdy, nor ever allowed an unpleasant word to escape my lip personally against any of you. The fact is that the relations and circumstances under which we meet are

the factors that are the real cause of this inevitable estrangement. As long as you deem it your duty to convey me to the scaffold fettered and hand-cuffed, so long I too must deem it my duty to frustrate your design and slip out of your hands if I could—and so neither of us can blame the other for the inevitable consequences. If you feel yourself justified in killing me, you must, man to man, feel me too justified in struggling to the last either in saving or avenging myself.

There the whole mental atmosphere changed, the officials ceased to talk of tortures. The naked sword that was hanging disappeared. Only the restraint under which Savarkar was put grew almost inhumanly straitened.

To add to this misery caused by external distress, Mr. Savarkar had to feel a mental distress far more awful than the first.

He had two aims in attempting the risky adventure at Marseilles. One of the chief was to frustrate the design of his enemies and mortify them before the eyes of the world by slipping out through their hands. Secondly, even though he had failed in doing that, at least the news of the attempt itself could not fail to advertise the cause of Indian Independence all over Europe and raise the prestige of Indian manhood in their moral estimation. But as it was, neither of these hopes seemed fulfilled, he was back in the hands of his foes, while the news of his thrilling adventures seemed to be suppressed The only difference that his adventure

made was that he found himself faced by immensely more unbearable hardships without effecting any benefit that would strengthen the national cause.

One consolation only remained : hast thou tried thy best? struggled manfully to the last in a noble cause! Well then ; success or failure matters not—thou hast done thy duty well.

He constantly kept lisping that line and somewhere near Aden when once the sea grew extremely rough, strange hopes rose and he sang this wild song which we render in English :—

"The steamer sailed on, the heat became unbearable. Life seemed a burden. What is now the use of living—only to be bound down to the wheels of the chariot of the exulting foes—to adorn his triumphs? Come, oh Death! Rise, oh sea, in a terrible storm and gather me up in the mighty folds of thy waves! I pressed thee once to take me back to my native shores : And thou hast heard my prayer—but in such a wise that thy blessing hast proved worse than thy curse! Now, pray help me at least to die! Be angry with me! and I pray, rise in fury and swallow me up in thy mighty wrath! So that thus at least may the foe be deprived of the unholy satisfaction of having wreaked his vengeance by subjecting me to cruel humiliations!

CHAPTER VII

AT LAST!

> "Oh blest are the bravest friends who shall live the day of glory to see!
>
> But next dearest blessing that heaven can give is the pride of thus dying for Thee.
>
> *Thomas Moore.*

AT last Mr. Savarkar landed back on those native shores for which "he longed and he pined"—but in a very different way. As soon as the steamer reached Bombay he was escorted down through rows of drawn swords and cuffed. He was immediately huddled into a motor, then in a train with doors and shutters closed. He was made to get down from the train and, once more in a close motor, driven to a big stony building. There he knew that he was in Nasik in the Police lock-up. He was taken with his hands tied with a rope which was held back by the sergeants and in that condition exposed to the gaze of all passers-by. None but the most trusted and tried sergeants were ordered to watch him.

Still in spite of all this precaution a couple of days did not pass when a small letter was dropped into his cell by some unknown person which informed him that the news of his escape had travelled faster than he did and that the French Government had already forwarded a demand to have him back.

Then the audacious adventure at Marseilles was not after all as great a failure as it first seemed to be! Of course there was little hope, Mr. Savarkar thought, of his being handed back to France;

but at any rate the second important object he had at heart was fulfilled. For the time being his romantic adventure and a diplomatic complication formed the foremost topic in the world press. That naturally made all inquire into India's struggle for freedom, the high-handedness with which the beauracracy, and in the ultimate sense the British people, ruled her, what her grievances were and what her claims.

British attempts to tighten their hold on Savarkar and their refusal to deliver him to France only made the contrast greater between their professions and practices. That a nation that ever boasted to have offered asylum to Mazzini and and Garibaldi and posed as the staunchest champion of the oppressed and the struggle for political liberty all over the world should have suddenly turned a somersault and changed its code of political morals as soon as one of those who were oppressed by themselves claimed that political liberty and demanded the protection of international law against their own interest, exposed the British Government to the ridicule of all Europe and America. From the remotest China to Egypt, all the world over, Mr. Savarkar's life and doings and photos were in demand and the papers, openly comparing him with Mazzini and Kossuth and Prince Kropotkin, supported the French demand to have him back. *La Humanity* and other French papers and leaders moved heaven and earth in France not to allow the question to be hushed up.

But France and Germany were not on good terms. Rumours of a great war to come were thick in high circles and so France, afraid of Germany could not afford to displease her probable and powerful ally, England, on account of such an issue as that. This was the reason why France, a nation that otherwise is so sensitive on questions of national honour, agreed to refer the issue to arbitration and the matter was sent up to The Hague—to the highest International Court in the world. To The Hague the Indian Revolutionists too hastened. A *written statement*, ending with an eloquent appeal to French honour, was written and smuggled out of his prison in India, by Mr. Savarkar reached their hands. They distributed copies of it to all nations and utilised the occasion to spread their propaganda, to relate the endless story of the wrongs and display the fetters that held their Motherland in bondage and to hold England to the ridicule of the world opinion.

All this news reached Savarkar who, even in the prison and even when under the strictest possible watch and ward, never failed to attract following and friends even amongst the officers themselves, Indians as well as Europeans, and managed to keep abreast with the world news. He felt delighed. Never mind, he thought, if I be not returned to France. I courted sufferings and death and I will face them. But I have the satisfaction of having shaken them so mightily and taxed all their ingenuity so severely as to render the story of

my arrest worthy of the President of Abhinava Bharat, quite in keeping with the patriotic and romantic tradition of the Italian or the Russian Revolutionists.

The officer-in-charge of the escort that took Mr. Savarkar to India was reduced in rank, and the French policeman too that had handed over Mr. Savarkar to the British Police was reported to have been sent to jail for his dereliction of duty. In India too a special Tribunal Act had to be passed under which cases of revolutionary nature could be tried without a jury and without an appeal. Thus dispensing with fundamental principles and conditions of justice the case of Mr. Savarkar, along with that of the Nasik conspiracy, was sent before this newly and almost specially devised Tribunal. The trial was a memorable one. The figure of Mr. Savarkar attracted the attention of all the educated world to it.

When Mr. Savarkar was brought under an armed escort in a closed car to the High Court, he was asked to enter the dock of the prisoners. While he was doing so he was lustily cheered. But by whom ? He looked at the galleries, they were vacant under orders; he looked at the corridors—not a man was allowed to enter the court except the chief parties to the case : he looked below and found some thirty to forty youths and gentlemen crowded in the steps in the dock enthusiastically welcoming him back ! They were his co-accused. They had borne unmentionable distresses—and



VINAYAK DAMODAR SAVARKAR

some of them only because of their friendship or relation with him—only to have something pumped out of them against him. Any sign betraying their acquaintance with him was likely to be construed as a further proof of their complicity in his revolutionary movements. But in spite of this all, his very sight enthused and inspired them with a new life and they all rose and cheered him and accorded a hearty welcome as soon as he entered the dock. Savarkar had been a popular hero throughout his life—had been taken in processions through thousands of followers and admirers—had been garlanded by towns and cities ; but never had any welcome touched him so deeply as that accorded by the little group of patriots who, even while they stood under the shadows of a scaffold for their relationship with him, instinctly rose to honour him back into their midst. He had at last the satisfaction of standing by the side of his comrades in the thick of the fight and bearing the greater part of the distressful and terrible burden of the untold miseries that were in store for them. When later on the court offered a chair and asked Mr. Savarkar to take his seat near the tribunal by the side of the Advocates, Mr. Savarkar politely declined the concession, adding that he felt more at ease amidst his fellow-accused, in the dock of prisoners than outside it.

Amongst them was his beloved youngest brother Narayan—now the well-known Maratha leader, Dr. Narayana Rao Savarkar. Him Vinayak had left a boy of 15 : now after four years he had

already grown into a youth of some 19 years of age. Naturally, Mr. Savarkar could not at once pick him out. His friends deliberately mixed him up in the group. It was only after an effort that Vinayakrao could "identify" him to the great amusement of his co-accused.

The trial opened. Mr. Savarkar declined to take any part whatever in the trial, adding that, although he knew he was not guilty of any crime whatever, he deemed himself to be under the protection of French Law and, in as much as he had been thence forcibly carried to India in contravention of International Law, he declined to be a willing party to that high-handed affair. He could not recognise British jurisdiction in India.

Throughout the trial where issues concerning life and death were involved, he sat perfectly unconcerned and concerned only about the fate of his comrades, busy in reading or taking down notes to guide the cross-examination of witnesses against his co-accused, or inspiring those who seemed to lose heart, or persuading and influencing others to withdraw their confessions which they said were extracted from them under pressure of torture. Informer after informer, and detective after detective, came and related, in most dreadful colours, accounts of Mr. Savarkar's activities which exposed him to fearful consequences—but he did not flinch a bit, refused to cross-examine and maintained the fierce attitude he once assumed "of not recognising British Jurisdiction in India."

How Mr. Savarkar was accused of smuggling now and then parcels of revolvers, even fifty at a time, under most ingenious designs, how daring had been the men who took them to India under the very nose of the ever-watchful customs officers and detectives, how bomb factories were established in Maharashtra as well as Bengal, how even girls at times carried and concealed explosives, how secret societies conducted by girls co-operated with those of youths, how sensational were the details of the plot and the execution of Mr. Jackson's assassination—these and other thrilling disclosures we have to pass over for want of space. Suffice it to say that, even while the dreadful trial was going on, revolutionary discussions were freely carried on in spite of, and in defiance of, the strictest Police attempts to stop the accused from conversing with one another and those of them who had not been the members of the Abhinava Bharat and knew not of revolutionary principles, were taught them and initiated into the brotherhood by Mr. Savarkar in the very dock—so reckless was his activity.

To-day the judgment is to be delivered. The accused, some forty men, are expecting the extreme penalty of the law. They are all tittering and humorously discussing who were likely to pass the "final examination" that day. Those who were likely to get transportation for life were marked out as securing the "first class," and the others the "second class," and so on. While those who were likely to be acquitted were humorously classed as

failures. At last the Judges solemnly heralded in the dreadful judgment was read out, and first of all, Mr. Savarkar was called out and sentenced to transportation for life : he partially rose and, in solemn acknowledgment of it, saluted his Motherland with a Vande Mataram !

The second and third and fourth—terrible sentences are being passed, terms of transportation and rigorous imprisonment. One of the charges against the accused being that they were in the habit of raising the cries of "Hail thee, Goddess of Independence !" on all public occasions, the Judges in dignified wrath pronounced the fearful sentences meant to cow down the culprits and rose. Even while they were turning their backs and the court standing to honour them, a loud acclamation rose from the dock. The sentenced culprits had risen in a body and raised that very war-cry "Hail thee, Goddess of Independence."

The Judges got startled at the loud shout, the Police rushed,—their chief furious with mortification roared and roared, "Pakdo, Maro ! Ab Kaidi Hai !" Down with them ! Thrash them, flog them, they are now prisoners ! while forty mingled voices raised the cry "Hail thee, Goddess of Independence."

The Police immediately fell on them, and handcuffing Mr. Savarkar, removed him from the dock. He took off his hat and, waving on farewell to them whom he in all human probabilities was never to see again, walked on.

Later on, as if this one sentence of transportation for life was not enough, a second trial based on identical facts—was instituted against him for abetment of murder in connection with the Jackson affair. Every one thought that this was only meant to hang him, but still he did not budge an inch. He stuck to his first statement and refused to recognise the authority of British Courts in India.

But whether it was the fierce searchlight of world opinion that was focussed on Mr. Savarkar owing to the Marseilles case and the proceedings of The Hague tribunal or otherwise, the Judges, convicting Mr. Savarkar of the second charge, sentenced him once more to a second transportation for life and did not pass a capital punishment.

He rose and declared : I am prepared to face ungrudgingly the extreme penalty of your laws, in the belief that it is through sufferings and sacrifice alone that our beloved Motherland can march on to an assured, if not a speedy, triumph!"

These were his last words : these also shall be the last words of this short sketch of his life.

He was immediately handcuffed and an armed guard removed him from the Court from the sight of the world—with the following Marathi song, which we render in English, on his lips :

"First Instalment"

Pleased be thou, mother ! to acknowledge this little service of thy children.

Boundless is our indebtedness to Thee ! Thou chose us to bless and suckle us at thy breast !

Behold! we enter the flames of this cousecrated Fire to-day. The first instalment of that debt of Love we pay.

And totally taking a new birth there and then will we immolate ourselves over and over again till the hungry God of sacrifice be full and crown Thee with glory.

With Shree Krishna for Thy redoubtable charioteer, and Shree Ram to lead and thirty crores of soldiers to fight under thy banner,

Thy army stops not though we fall!

But pressing on shall utterly rout the forces of Evil and Thy right hand, Oh Mother, shall plant the golden Banner of Righteousness and Independence on the triumphant Tops of the Himalayas.

APPENDIX I

Just to let in a ray or two more into the secret chambers of the activities of Abhinava Bharat which must long remain dark and sealed to the outside public for the simple reason, that their disclosure cannot be made by the actors who took part in them under the present political conditions in India, we take the liberty of reproducing two reminiscences as related by two distinguished men who wrote them from personal knowledge. One is from the pen of Mr. Savarkar himself. Only this year he wrote it in the "Mahratta" of Poona on the news of the sudden and sad demise of Mr. V. V. S. Aiyer, who went to England as a confirmed moderate, slowly drifted towards revolutionary tenets after he came in contact with Mr. Savarkar and ultimately worked so jealously and so fearlessly in that party that he became the most trusted comrade of Mr. Savarkar and rose to be the Vice-President of the Abhinava Bharat. The Rowlatt Report tells us how he was suspected of being the leader of the Pondicheri branch of that Society and how it was under his guidance that a Shakt Brahman shot the collector of Tuticorin in 1911. The Rowlatt Report calls Mr. Aiyer "the right hand man of Savarkar." Says the letter to the "Mahratta"—

"Heavy griefs have often embittered our life; but none heavier than what thy sudden death caused, oh friend, ever taxed our capacity to endure. Memories of those momentous years and trying days rise in a flood and, struggling to find a vent, keep knocking at the gates of our heart. How we wish we could have spoken of them all and recited our reminiscences; but our lips must remain sealed. How we long to write of the goodness and gentleness of disposition—how when betrayed thou stoodst unshaken, how thou servedst them who owned thee not and how thou sufferedst when unknown and madest not the slightest mention of it when thou gotst known—how we long to write of it all, but our pen is a broken reed. The noble story of thy life must for the time being, may perhaps, for all time to come, remain untold. For while those who can recite it are living, the time to tell it may not come and when the time comes when all that is worth telling will no longer remain suppressed and will be eagerly listened to, the generation that could have recounted it might have passed away. Thy greatness, therefore, must stand undimmed but unwitnessed by man like the lofty Himalayan peaks. Thy services and sacrifices must lie buried in oblivion as do the foundations of a mighty castle.

"The news of thy sudden death was bitter enough. But bitterer by far is this our inability to relate to posterity under what heavy obligations thou hast placed them and to express the fulness of our personal and public grief.

"For indeed he was a pillar of strength, a Hindu of Hindus, and in him our Hindu race has lost one of the most exalted representatives and a perfect flower of our Hindu civilization—ripe in experience, and mellowed by sufferings and devoted to the service of man and God, the cause of Hindu Sanghatan was sure to find in him one of its best and foremost champions in Madras.

"In 1907 or somewhere there, one day the maid-servant at the famous India House in London handed a visiting card to us as we came downstairs to dine and told us the gentleman was waiting in the drawing room. Presently the door was flung open and a gentleman, neatly dressed in European custume and inclined to be fashionable, warmly shook hands with us. He told us he had been a pleader at Rangoon and had come over to England to qualify himself as a full-fledged barrister. He was past thirty and seemed a bit agreeably surprised to find us so young. He assured us of his intention to study English music and even assured us that he was eager to get a few lessons in dancing as well. We, as usual, entered our mild protest against thus dissipating the energy of our youth in light-hearted pastimes when momentous issues hung in the balance. The gentleman, unconvinced impressed, took our leave promising to continue to call upon us every now and then.—*He was Shrijut V. V. S. Aiyer.*

"In 1910 somewhere in March, we stood as a prisoner, then only very recently pent up in Brixon—the formidable prison in London. The warder announced visits, anxiously we accompany the file of prisoners to the visiting yard. We stand behind the bars wondering who could have come to call on us and thus invited the unpleasant attentions of the London Police. For to acknowledge our acquaintance from the visitor's box in front of the prison bars was a sure step to eventually get behind them. The visitors are let in. They crowdedly pass past our window. Presently one dignified figure enters the box in front of us. It was V. V. S. Aiyer. His beard was closely waving on his breast. He was unkempt. He was no longer the neatly dressed fashionable gentleman. His whole figure was transformed with some great act of dedication of life. 'Oh leader!' he feelingly accosted us: 'why you left Paris at all'! We soothingly said what is the use of now discussing it here. Rightly or not I am here, pent up in this prison—and the best way

now is to see what is to be done next, how to face the present.

While fully discussing the future plans the bell rang and the warders came rushing and shouting unceremoniously—"Time is up." With a heavy heart we looked into each other's eyes. We knew it would perhaps be the last time we ever saw each other in this life. Tears rose. Suppressing them we said: "No! no! We are Hindus. We have read the Gita. We must not weep in the presence of these unsympathetic crowds." We spoke in Hindi, curious crowds of Englishmen watched the young Indian rebel and his friend. We parted. I watched him till he disappeared and said to my mind, "Alas! It is well nigh impossible to see this loving soul again." For one of two fates was certain to fall to my lot, the gallows or the Andamans, and neither could hold any prospect before me of seeing my friends again.

This was in 1910. Fourteen years rolled by, and the impossible actually happened. Travelling the most dangerous and meandering by-paths and by-lanes and subterrenean passages of life, so formidably bordering the realms of death, I met Shrijut Aiyer a couple of months ago. He had travelled all the distance from Madras to Bombay to enable us to revel a few hours in the wine of romantic joy. We forgot for a while the bitterness and the keen pangs of the afflicted and tortured past and lightly gossiped as boys fresh from schools meeting after a long holiday. He took my leave. I watched him disappear and said to my mind, "Now I can call him again any time I like."

Little I knew that it was then that he was to disappear beyond all human recall. When human wisdom shook its head and snorted out "Impossible," events proved it possible and when it gaily assured itself, "at any time," Destiny put in a stern Never; thus our Fate seems to act with no nobler intention than to mock and humiliate human calculations!

With Aiyer the politician we cannot concern ourselves here. It is the loss of Aiyer, the scholar, the friend, the noblest type of a Hindu gentleman, the author of *Kural*, the saintly soul, whose life has been one continuous sacrifice and worship, that we so bitterly bewail today and bitterly chafe at our inability to pay a public tribute to his memory in a fashion worthy of the noble dead. Oh, the times on which our generation has fallen! The noblest sink down and are washed off to the shores of death, while the unworthy keep gaily swimming on the tides of life.

But thou hast done thy duty, friend! It was for Human Love, that thou livedst and thou diedst too for human love even as martyr unto her.

Thou knewest no peace in life, Oh ! Soldier of God. But peace be with Thee in Death. Oh friend ! peace be with thee and divine rest !

II

The second reminiscence comes from the fascinating pen of Mr. Asaf Ali, Bar-at-law, and will enable the reader to see Mr. Savarkar as seen by others in London who were more or less in the know.

"Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with memory a great part even of our living beings: we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but a short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us....... To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days."

"Hydriotaphia—Sir Thomas Browne"

The extract given below is taken from a letter written by Savarkar from the Andamans. I came across a copy of it with a friend in Paris, and, while reading it, was struck by the penetrating pathos of the entire document—*De Profundis* presents another type of the pathos or penitance although it is a very distant cry from Oscar Wilde to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.

Life in the Andamans

Says Savarkar: "..........for now-a-days I am in a cell from which a bit of the sky is visible. I watch the glorious sunset and the pomp of light and shade, and lose myself in the rose, the lily, and the lilacs of the West........." The language is that of Savarkar, but the spirit is that of a poet, or a word-painter. It seems as if "being cabbined, cribbed, confined" means an awaking of dormant powers, in fact, all suffering, all sorrowing, unbandages the inner eye and uncovers the mental ear, and the sufferer wakes in a subjective world of colours and songs bidden from the earthly senses.

A prisoner's musings

And here is an inimitable description of his lonely musings, "and if at times the mind like a child gets silly, and will weep, the grand man Reason steps in and smilingly 'Well' sweet heart what ails thee? what—unknown you suffer? How silly—did you want to be the king of India yourself? If you did, well then, you deserve to be baffled and defeated in such a selfish and demoralising ambition. But God and I know; you did not want any reward personally. No, neither fame, nor name, nor money. Nay, not even happiness.

The only thing you wanted was to be privileged to suffer most—at least that is what you used to say in my presence! To sacrifice most for others, or humanity—Then lo! Where is the disappointment?.........Not a minute, not an action of yours—but it is dedicated to the purification of your race through suffering and repenting of its past.'" The mist of a foreign language clings to his expression, but you cannot miss the crystal spirit, the soul-stirring sincerity of his feelings. Savarkar is nothing if he is not sincere.

He sends greetings

Again I come upon another quotable fragment. "And now shall I express myself," says he, "names dearest, not to utter which seems a sacrilege, and yet which cannot be uttered for their own sake from this jail, wherein not only limbs but tongues are fettered."

More musings

Another fragment, which I seem to have carefully preserved gives his views on the study of abstruse subjects, might be appropriate in America and England (this was before the world-conflagration broke out), but not in India which, he thought, had yet to reach that stage of development which might enable her people to devote their attention to the recondite problems of life and death, of God and soul. He rounded off his observations with the pregnant remark that Baji Rao II was a great Vedantist, and that is why perhaps he could not see the difference "between a Kingdom and a pension." He emphasised the study of History, Political Economy and Science.

Reminiscences

And now I shall attempt to jot down such of my reminiscences as are associated with the name and personality of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. For the first time I heard of Savarkar in the most casual way from Riza just before I left for England in 1909. But I had no idea of who and what he was. On arriving at the India House, Highgate, London, I, my old friend Saiyad Haider Riza who distinguished himself as a powerful platform speaker in the year 1907 and 1908, and another friend (all the three of us having travelled together), were ushered into the dining room, where several cheerful faces greeted us. Saiyad Haider Riza carried a reputation with him, especially as he had been granted a scholarship by old Pandit Shamji Krishna Varma (which, however, he, like others, resigned within a short time of his arrival there), and therefore it was natural to expect that Savarkar, who was the "boss of the house", would personally welcome Saiyad Haider Riza.

I meet Savarkar

I took another gentleman, who looked rather prominent, and who has since then become sufficiently distinguished in his own way to be Governor of the House, but he hastened to inform us that Mr. Savarkar would soon be down. Presently the door of the dining room was thrown open and there entered a short but rather agile figure, bearing a clean shaven and smiling face, a pair of keen and, I thought, fascinating eyes behind a gold pince-nez secured by a real gold chain attached to the left ear, hair parted on one side so as to make a neat bracket with curls on a moderately open forehead. The moment he opened his lips there emanated from them a sort of juvenile musical voice, which was inclined to be shrill but not unpleasantly so. There was a softness in his appearance and a something in his voice, which bordered on the feminine— to be something out of the ordinary one must possess something of the opposite sex, for is not genius sexless? This was Savarkar, fragile as an anaemic girl, restless as a mountain torrent, and keen as the edge of a Toledo-blade. There was no hesitation, no stopping to think about him. All opinions and actions came from him in an easy flow, and bore the stamp of unshakeable self-confidence. He seldom opened lips except to convince or at least silence the listener. As I think of it now, I wonder how so young a person—for he could not have been much beyond two or three and twenty in 1909—commanded the will of almost every one who came into contact with him. I knew he was accused by some of his intellectual friends as a born leader, a man cut out for the part. He typified in himself the rivals as a " tyrant ", but Vinayak was a spirit of Shivaji and, I believe, consiously imitated Giuseppe Mazzini in his general behaviour.

Savarkar's manner

He used to be an ardent admirer and a very careful student of Mazzini's life-teaching and owed much of his politics, inspiration to that Italian patriot and thinker. But apart from what he had consciously acquired or unconsciously assimilated he seemed to possess no few distinctive marks of character, such as an amazing presence of mind, indomitable courage, unconquerable confidence in his capability to achieve great things, and a subtle genius for mastering complete details and devising astonishing means to reconcile conflicting interests. A born captain, he loved and clove to his lieutenants and those who could fit into his scheme of things, but he brooked no rivals and somehow managed to leave every claimant to the first position in the cold, and in a

manner that you failed to notice any manoeuvre about it. He struck me as an incomparable strategist, whose manoeuvres were sure and certain, and so cleverly marked that the practised eye failed to detect the process, and yet the results were there, and you admitted his nimble skill. Saiyad Haider Riza was the next to measure swords with the Mahratha leader, and the former was no mean rival, being a skilled protoganist and well equipped with the double-edged sword of eloquence. The contest was precipitated at the earlist opportunity that offered itself, the usual Sunday gathering at India House. The proceedings commenced with either Savarkar or somebody else in the chair. The interest of the audience was concentrated on the much-talked-of "Agitator from Delhi," who in his turn must have felt a great deal uneasy in his mind, for the combat appeared imminent and was perhaps consciously brought about, and if Saiyad Haider Riza lost, he stood to lose more than a mere reputation. He could therefore be excused for nervousness.

A battle of Giants

On the other hand Savarkar stood on firm ground—the esteem and affection of his adherents. Some nonentity opened the debate, and some other nonentity carried it further. Until a third or fourth nonentity made a breach in the bulwark, and here was a chance for Riza, who allowed himself to be coaxed to mount the breach (Riza had not learnt to eschew a certain silly trick, which had its origin in vanity pure and simple, of holding out until appealed to). He rose deliberately, with the mien and gesture of a self-conscious actor (scarce realising that sincerity is a fatal weapon against the artificial cannon of rhetoric), in fact, almost scorning the danger, in excess of confidence, he led the assault with a recklessness obviously histrionic in execution, and failing to make any marked impression even on the neutrals—heroically cast off his heavy blunderbus of mere rhetoric and brandished the sharp rapier of sentimental appeal, but the performance proved ineffective. The winding up was a matter of indifference to us, myself and another friend who were supposed to be sworn partisans—because the earlier failure meant a regular stew to us, and since defeat was evident, we hung our heads in dejection.

Savarkar Speaks

And now rose Savarkar—he was always careful to have the "last word" which never failed of effect—and the difference, not in rhetoric but in lucidity of expression and sincerity of feeling, was marked from the beginning. Although

Savarkar's speech used to be marked by a certain indifference to grammatical precision, he had a magic way of riveting the attention of his audience and holding every one spell-bound for the whole time he spoke. His words proceeded from a deep feeling and conviction and penetrated to the depth of the listener's heart. His appeals were never made in vain; they went straight to the heart. As I review the past to day, I feel bound to acknowledge that the quality which secured his speeches a place unmistakably superior to that claimed for studied rhetoric and polished oratory, was deep "sincerity of feeling." Nor is it an exaggeration to say Savarkar is one of the few really effective speakers I have known and heard, and there is hardly an orator of the first rank either here or in England whom I have not had the privilege of hearing—excepting Mr. Eardly Norton, of whom I have heard so much that I should be almost reluctant to avail myself of the opportinuty of hearing him speak lest I should be disappointed. So it was a walk-over for Savarkar and poor Riza had lost his chance.

His Political Inspiration

The Sedition Committee have more or less fully dealt with Savarkar and his so-called revolutionery activities. But to understand his political ideals one must know the source of his inspiration. Shivaji and Giuseppe Mazzini were his two heroes. He worshipped at their shrines and, one thought, deliberately imitated their illustrious examples. His mind was fully saturated with Mazzini's teachings before he proceeded to England and the free atmosphere of the British Isles served to nourish and ripen the lessons he had imbibed. Mazzini's life and teachings hourly fed the flame of his soul, and seemed to inspire his activity in the minute details. His own speeches at the Sunday meetings at India House were liberally leavened with the revolutionary ethics of the Italian patriots, and when the fuller history of his life comes to be written, his biographer will find no great difficulty in tracing the simplest acts of his life to some sentence in the "Duties of Man" or to the life of the Mahratha leader who successfully harassed and sufficiently humiliated the Emperor Aurangzeb, by humbling the pride of the Mughal Generals with a handful of predatory Mahratta horsemen. One may say that with Mazzini he believed that "When a man has once said to himself in all seriousness of thought and feeling, 'I believe in liberty and country and humanity,' he is bound to fight for liberty, country and humanity, fight as long as life lasts, fight always, fight with every weapon, face all from death to ridicule, face hatred and contempt, work on because it is his duty and for no other

reason." This is what Mazzini once wrote to a friend, and I have already quoted an extract from Savarkar's letter from the Andamans. There is a close kinship of thought in these two quotations.

An Analysis

Har Dayal happened to be in Honolulu at the time Savarkar was extradited from England, or sometime later, and conceived the idea of writing his biography. He wrote to a friend in Paris to collect all the necessary material for the purpose. This friend appeared to all those who knew Savarkar and asked me also to furnish Har Dayal with what I could recollect. Savarkar was looked upon by those who had ever met him as a youth of a distinctly intellectual stamp, and a passionate patriot who thought nothing of the highest sacrifice for his ideals. To him life was nothing but incense to be burnt on the altar of ideals. He was inexperienced, like a great many other youths, and was so completely consumed by the passion to realise his vision of a free India and an emancipated humanity, that he had cheerfully walked headlong into the very jaws of Tophet and sacrificed the flower of his youth in the hope and the belief which to my mind, must have been inspired by a pregnant observation of Joseph Mazzini, namely, "Ideas ripen quickly, when nourished by blood of Martyrs." And there is yet another observation of Mazzini which may fairly be presumed to have affected Savarkar's thoughts to no small degree. The Italian revolutionary leader once said : "Sometimes I fancy I am hated by those I love tonight, and ask pardon of my God for having been a conspirator; not that I least repent the reasons for it, or recant a single one of my beliefs, which were and are and will be a religion to me, but because I ought to have seen that there are times when the believer should only sacrifice himself to his beliefs." To be quite candid, this is a trend of thought which has characterised the mental process of most of those whom I have known to be associated with any movement involving any sacrifice. It reduces the field of one's proselytisation to the "ego" only, for the moral responsibility of converting others is so crushing that none but the strongest minds dare undertake to shoulder so heavy a burden. Weaker minds must succumb to weight, and that is a contingency always to be dreaded by thinking men. However, all this was parenthetical.

Idealist not Cruel

I was saying that Savarkar, so far from being regarded as a cut-throat, was considered a high-souled young man of unimpeachable honesty, perhaps woefully inexperienced and decidedly ideologist. And therefore there seemed no reason

why he should not find a worthy biographer in Har Dayal, who, however, to my knowledge has not executed the projected life sketch. Such material, however, as I could possibly furnish HarDayal, I am now endeavouring to set down here. When Goethe made Ottilie put down in her diary, "We venture upon anything in society except only what involves a consequence," he intended a great truth to be stated in an epigram. The necessary corollary is obvious: "To venture upon a thing involving a consequence you must possess a soul of a hero." And in this sense Savarkar is a born hero, for he could almost despise those who shirked duty for fear of consequences. If once he rightly or wrongly believed that a certain system of Government was iniquitous, he felt no scruples in devising means to eradicate the evil.

On original Idea

His optimism discounted adverse odds, and he condemned consequences. I shall never forget a certain academic discussion which arose from a speculative proposition, based on the assumption that the British had withdrawn from India bag and baggage and left the country entirely to her resources, exposed to naval invasions by other powers. "What then," the question was, ' would be India's opportunity to defend her shores against the invading hosts?" A full summary of the various answers would be futile though interesting, but the suggestion put forward by Savarkar was as astounding as it was (as I think now) irredeemably imaginary. He proposed the removal of our coastal inhabitants, some 20 miles inland, to the right out of the possible zone of fire. The longest range of the naval gun known at the time was 14 miles, if I remember aright, and in case the present defences of our ports, (which were regarded adequate) were in some way rendered ineffective, long range guns (of which a plentiful supply was presumed!) were to keep the dogs of war and engines of horror off our coast. Such ingenuity could be born of inordinate optimism only, although I confess I myself may have admired it 15 years ago. The late war has taught a host of salutary lessons to a great many military experts today, and I have not the least doubt that Savarkar himself would be the first to laugh at any such strategy to-day.

Youthful experience

The impatience and experience of youth coupled with the ardent passion of the idealist are apt to blind one to some very broad facts, when the most childish plans appear as the most perfect human mind can ever devise, but to ridicule such a state of mind or to penalise it is a contemptible remedy. Experience, closer grips with hard facts of life alone serve

to disillusion the so-called "impatient idealist" and restore his sense of proportion. And this reminds me that once, early in 1912, a certain very highly placed official invited me to discuss the Nationalist programme (which was an euphemism for "the Revolutionary programme") with him and confronted me with the pulverising blow when in the plenitude of candour and what I regarded as just pride, he said, "But where is the sense of proportion in all these elaborate theories? We have left you no temptations; the army and the navy, which alone can form the real basis of a successful revolution, are entirely in our hands." This was a "facer." But should that gentleman or any other of his like chance to read this now, let the following reflection of Mazzini be my final reply :—

A thoughtful reply

"Ideas rule the world and its events. A revolution is the passage of an idea from 'theory' to 'practice.' Whatever men have said 'material' interests never have caused and never will cause a Revolution. Extreme poverty, financial ruin, oppressive or inequal taxation, 'may' provoke risings that are more or less threatening or violent, but nothing more. Revolutions have their origin in the 'mind', in the very root of life, not in the body, in the material organism. A 'Religion' or a Philosophy lies at the base of every 'Revolution.' This is a truth that can be proved from the whole historical tradition of humanity." No heavy guns and howitzers, not millions of fighting men, nor mountains of gold; but "ideas" effect revolution. Such is the daily accumulating testimony of current events.

Savarkar's unpublished book

Savarkar had ransacked the rich library of the India Office and unearthed a vast variety of historical treasures after patient toil of months, to adorn a book he had written. When I made his acquaintance he had already finished his labours, and was the author of the unpublished work *The History of the Indian War of Independence of* 1857. Chapters of this work used to be read out at some of the Sunday meetings at India House. Savarkar had collected very rare accounts of most of the events of the year 1856-7-8 and had incorporated them into this book in such a way that served to bear out his theory that the rising of 1857 was far too well-organised and purposive to be a mere caprice of mutinous troops; it was a systematic attempt by the leaders of decaying power to shake itself free of alien domination. Savarkar used to be a very careful and, I believe, not an uncritical student of history and politics, and was not, except of set design, oblivious of the

fallacious nature of the title he had selected for his book. He knew that abortive attempts for the overthrow of a paramount power must ever go down in history as "mutinies and rebellions," only successful risings being entitled to be remembered by the dignified expression "Wars of Independence." He was fully aware that George Washington, had he been defeated, would have come down to us as an arch rebel, a traitor to Great Britain, a name abhorred and execrated through all time; but he maintained that the rising of 1857 was not a mere mutiny and India should not be imposed upon and the memory of her coming generations poisoned with so monstrous a lie.

Basis of his Theory

History after all is the representation of certain facts according to the authors, and chroniclers' points of view. Given a certain set of facts each individual draws his own inference. The very facts which went to substantiate the theory of mutiny, were successfully employed by Savarkar to sustain his contention about a "National Rising." He had exumed some very interesting documents which formed the basis of his argument. There was a proclamation or an appeal by the Begums of Oudh, and another by one Maulavi Ahmad Shah which called upon all Hindus and Mussalmans to unite in self-defence against the rising "Usurper" *i. e.*, the East India Company's governing organization or the parent of the present bureaucracy.

His book Proscribed

Members of "Abhinava Bharat" or "New India Society" of Cromwell Avenue, London, contributed funds for its publication, but the Government conceived a violent dislike to this work and proscribed it before its publication. Maulana Mahomed Ali tells an amusing story about obtaining it on loan from his "old friend" Sir Charles Cleveland, not for review in the late "Comrade," but for his personal delectation. This book, it appears, was smuggled into India by an ingenoius device: it was wrapped in a cover marked "Posthumous papers of the Picwick Club" and sent out under a famous Oxford booksellers' wrappers; but the vigilance of the "Argus-eyed monster" at the Bombay Custom House spotted it. I hold it as my firm opinion to-day as before that Government even from its own crabbed point of view was not less wise in proscribing the book, than it is in shutting the doors of India in the face of the so-called revolutionary young men who are now in exile. Having read it myself I can safely assert that it is absolutely innocuous as compared with, say, the narrative told by Hudson of Hudson House or some

other works written on the subject and within everybody's reach.

Thrashed for Justifiable Protest

There are a host of minor anecdotes which I could relate here, but I shall content myself with reproducing two or three of them. The first of these takes me back to a stirring incident which illustrates Savarkar's remarkable courage and astonishing presence of mind, Sir Curzon Willie's assassination stirred the social and political circles of London to their very depths, and evoked a public condemnation of the "dreadful" and, as it was generally described, " dastardly deed" by the Indians resident in England. A public meeting was accordingly convened : but while Madanlal Dhingra was under trial, Savarkar saw the fallacy of these proceedings and determined in consultation with his friends to protest against a premature verdict. He went to the meeting which was being held at Caxton Hall, H. H. the Aga Khan presiding. Among those present were Mr. B. C. Pal, Sir Mancharji Bhavnagari, the Right Hon. Sayed Amer Ali, Sir Surendranath Banerji and a host of other celebrities, real and pseudo patriots and so forth. Savarkar, to the horror of a great many present and to the admiration of his friends, rose and protested against the premature proceedings, when he was brutally attacked by some ultra zealous Indians and carried out bleeding !

The words on his lips were " I was perfectly within my right." He happened to be staying with Mr. B. C. Pal at the time—not many houses from my diggings. I paid him a visit soon after my return from that meeting and found him confined to bed with fever. He had a wet bandage across his brow and over the injured eye and was tossing restlessly in his bed in pain ; but his mind was active as ever, and he was dictating a letter to the press, justifying his protest against the proceedings of the day on the obvious ground that passing a verdict on an undertrial prisoner out of Court was undeniably " Contempt of Court." Who could help admiring his courage, and presence of mind ? I forget whether this letter appeared in any paper, but I have an idea that it did. I believe Savarkar had to quit Mr. Pal's house very soon after this, and if I am not mistaken he went away for a change.

India-House Brotherhood

The Willie assassination marked the disintegration of the India-House Brotherhood ; for Madanlal had once been inmate of that place, and all sorts of insinuations and rumours filled the air, and ultimately led to the desecration of that

House. But the Sunday meetings did not cease. They continued to be held in other places, and nearly went the round of the lodgings of all the members of Abhinava Bharat. I have noted this fact to show the earnestness and truthful constancy of those who belonged to this brotherhood. Sometime after this Savarkar was down with pneumonia, and had a very near shave of it.

A Nasty Incident

I may be permitted to recall a certain incident here which may cause a raising of eye-brows. I happened to be the guest of a certain Anglo-Indian friend about this time. He expressed much uncommon interest in Savarkar, and learning that he was laid up with a nasty attack of double pneumonia, seemed to evince what at first appeared to be tender solicitude for him and began to make minute inquiries about his medical adviser. As I was not altogether unaware of the nature of this gentleman's interest in Savarkar I was not a little surprised at this unexpected manifestation of concern. But a subsequent remark, although uttered in the gentlest of tones, betrayed the horrifying nature of his seeming solicitude and gave me a glimpse of the flaming pit underneath, and the shock was so violent that my host found no difficulty in gauging its magnitude from my face. We parted a moment after that with altered feelings on either side ; but this was my first experience of the inhuman callousness of certain types of humanity. He was a very different sort of man in every other way. However I lost no time in going to Savarkar straight. It was not my habit to burst with narratives, but having satisfied myself that an Indian of qualification was also in attendance, desired it to be very clearly understood that he must be present at all consultations. This affair marked an epoch in my life ; for the shock of this disillusionment led to a clearer perception of certain things.

Takes refuge in Paris

Savarkar recovered from this illness, but the air grew thick and stifling with "warnings" and he was persuaded to seek the healthier and clearer atmosphere of the French metropolis. This was sometime after poor Dhingra had met his fate. Savarkar was followed by some other members of the fraternity. Whether there was any real danger to them all or not, they were all warned in time to escape any process of law which might have operated against them, and then came the fateful event in Savarkar's life.

One fateful day he crossed the Channel and was placed under arrest immediately on touching English shore.

Extradition Proceedings

The Extradition proceedings opened at the Police Court in London. The late Sir Alfred de Ritzen, the presiding officer, was a typical magistrate, with a pair of hawk-like eyes, which seemed to penetrate deep into your soul. Savarkar appeared thoroughly calm and composed in the dock, and smilingly nodded to all the friends, who had gone there to hear the case. A certain K. C. and an Indian counsel were engaged to oppose the petition for extradition, and a certain police officer who had gone from Bombay attended also the Court in a garb suited to the Indian climate, but strangely out of place in London. Some unmannerly young fellows openly made fun of it, and passed audible, rude remarks and were threatened by Inspector McKarthy to be disallowed to re-enter the Court—for this happened outside the Court during the lunch interval. Those who carefully followed the proceedings, consequent on the petition for extradition, regarded the optimism of certain friends with grave misgivings.

Irish to the Rescue

Certain Irish friends wondered that an Indian could not be found to take Savarkar's place, after helping him to escape and volunteered to help any attempts at rescue. Out of this arose a veritable romance of modern times. I came to know of it from a friend who had heard it from another friend in Paris. Thus it has all its value as fiction. A certain friend of Savarkar acting in concert with some Irish friends devised an elaborate plan of rescue, which involved some desperate things. Either somebody was to visit Savarkar in prison and change places with him, or perhaps, the taxi-cab in which he used to be conducted to and back from the Court was to be held up by a band of men hired to rescue him, or some such desperate step had to be taken.

* * *

While this and other equally wild plots for rescue were, I presume, being hatched, Sir Alfred had found against Savarkar and he was duly extradited.

Sensation in three Countries

However, Savarkar himself was to furnish three countries, England, France and India, a most thrilling adventure. He was supposed to have despatched a message to friends in Paris (before sailing under arrest) to meet him at Marseilles. One morning the newpapers were full of "A thrilling Escape at Marseilles." The boat which was carrying the illustrious prisoner touched at Marseilles, and while it lay at anchor Savarkar asked the escorting police officer to let him

have a bath. Divesting himself of his clothes and soaping himself all over, he slipped out of the porthole of the bath room and swam a distance of no less than 100 yards, (if anything upwards,) and reached the French soil! The sight of a nearly nude person swimming from the side of the boat shoreward was too conspicuous to escape notice. The truth of the matter was soon discovered and proper signals to those on shore led a French "gendarme" to arrest Savarkar the moment he touched land, although after a race and some physical struggle! Had not Savarkar been out of breath after swimming so long a distance, no "gendarme" could have overtaken him. The friends who had gone to Marseilles to meet him, arrived there too late! *

The Huge Mystery

I am altogether hazy now as to whether or not the friends who were to meet him at Marseilles had guessed that an escape would be attempted, but I think some sort of rescue was in contemplation, and an automobile was to be waiting. Had Savarkar been conversant with French, it would have been of immense value to him. But he was handed back to the officer who was escorting him, apparently in flagrant contravention of the international "convention about the right of asylum." M. Langust and Socialist deputies left no stone unturned in endeavouring to bring this case before the Hague Tribunal and declare Savarkar as one who was entitled to the right of asylum in France—and up to this day it is treated as a mystery in Indian circles how that tribunal decided the case against the French Government. I am convinced up to this moment that Savarkar's arrest by the French "gendarme" and his restoration to the ship on board which he was carried a prisoner were gross violations of international rights, and I say this irrespective of the charges proved against Savarkar afterwards. And this is the story how the hero of a real and truly thrilling adventure was delivered over to the coils of the boa-constrictor of law.

A Great Speech

One more anecdote and I have done. "Mr. Gandhi of South Africa Fame" (and not Mahatma Gandhi of our day) happened to be in London in 1909, I think, and India House decided to invite him to preside at a dinner organised on the occasion of Dussera. Mr. M. K. Gandhi was greatly admired for the firmness of his attitude in regard to what was regarded an onslaught on the rights of

* The details of the escape recounted there are partially incorrect. The real story as far as it could be ascertained is already narrated in the sketch.

South African Indians; but India House looked upon him (and also Mr. Gokhale), as a man of moderate views who was too good-natured or perhaps weak to think of any vigorous line of action. However, Mr. Gandhi deserved to be respected. But Mr. Gandhi who attended the dinner in a swallow-tail coat and a stiff-front shirt, spoke just a few non-committal words and resumed his seat after saying "But Mr. Savarkar, the speaker of the evening, is to follow me, and I should not like to stand between you and him"! Although that vetern orator Mr. B.C. Pal was one of the speakers of the evening, Savarkar rose in all the confidence of one, who was admitted to be easily the first and who himself felt as much, and delivered one of the finest speeches I have ever listened to.

APPENDIX II

In spite of the fact that, after the second conviction and sentence and the result of the Hague Arbitration which admitted the inability of the International Tribunal to force England to hand over the famous Indian prisoner back to France, Mr. Savarkar was transported to the far off and lonely isles of the Andamans and hid from public gaze in prisons there for more than 14 years, his grateful country did not, and could not, forget him even for a day. His memory was cherished as a sacred trust, his heroic figure grew into a mythical character in the eyes of the young and the rising generation and his name became a nucleus round which romantic legends clung. The press and the platform never ceased to agitate for his release. After the war a national petition signed by no less than sixty to seventy thousand persons was submitted to the Government demanding his release. Towns and cities all over India held meetings and demonstrations, Provincial Conferences year in and year out passed resolutions, and people organised and observed " Savarkar Weeks," evincing the deepest concern with the sufferings of that illustrious prisoner in the Andamans. The National Congress itself, in a special resolution proposed from the Presidencial Chair, expressed its sympathy with the patriot. And when at last he was partially released and veritably rose out of his grave, a rejoicing nation offered him an enthusiastic welcome. He was, under the conditions of his release, to be interned in an out-of-the-way town, in Ratnagiri, and so could not visit other places. Yet the few towns he could visit on his way carried him in crowded processions. The city of Nasik especially poured out in thousands to honour her heroic son and Savarkar's entry into Nasik was indeed a triumphal procession. Nor did the people of Maharashtra as a whole lag behind. A national

purse was collected and offered to him as a humble token of the love and admiration of Maharashtra and a national address was read by Mr. N. C. Kelkar in the name of all Maharashtra where leaders and distinguished representatives of the people gathered from far and near under the presidency of Dr. Moonji. Shri Shankaracharya too blessed the occasion. We take the liberty of rendering the national address into English.

"To Deshbhakt Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, B.A., Bar-at-Law,

The people of Maharashtra beg to express on this occasion the high esteem in which they hold your name for your intense patriotism and the untold sufferings you underwent in the interest of the national cause.

In politics, as in religion, many a way leads to the ultimate goal and under differing circumstances different means have been resorted to and held justifiable by history in the realization of great ideals.

Your public career, before your imprisonment, was so spirited, inspiring and brilliant, even if short, that it justifies the dictum in Mahabharat—It is better to blaze a while than to keep only smoking and smouldering all through.

It is this courage of conviction that flinches not to act up to the dictates of one's conscience nor hesitates to brave its consequences, that carries within it the seeds of manly progress.

To stay out the term of a transportation for life is regarded as a veritable rebirth amongst our people. The fact that your extraordinary staying power and fortitude should have enabled you not only to survive the horrors of this fearful term of imprisonment, but should still inspire you to take up your public mission immediately you came out, is indeed marvellous. All Maharashtra is really filled with wondering delight and loving pride at its sight.

We have organised this public function to present you with this humble token to express, however inadequately, these our feelings of esteem and gratefulness and marvelling love that we all cherish towards you. We earnestly hope that you will oblige us all by accepting it in the spirit it is offered.

Though released from prison, you are still pent up within the thorny hedge of internment. Still that too will soon be removed and you will once more be free to carry your work unrestricted. In this hope Maharashtra offers you this humble present of a purse and devotedly prays that God may grant you sound health and a long and useful life."

APPENDIX III

A few extracts from the Judgment of the Special Tribunal in the case of Mr. Savarkar which resulted in his conviction.

* * *

" The case for the prosecution is that we have here to deal with certain members of a revolutionary conspiracy existing in Nasik, Bombay, Pen, Poona, Yeola, Aurangabad and other places in the Deccan, the activities of which were directed by the energy of Vinayak Savarkar towards political assassination by means of pistols and explosives.

* * *

"The evidence in this case establishes that, prior to the year 1906, an association of young men, mostly Brahmans, existed in Nasik under the leadership of Ganesh and Vinayak Savarkar, which was known as the Mitra Mela.

* * *

" At which the biographies of patriotic revolutionaries were read and re-read, the particular favourites being Mazzini, Shivaji and Ramdas and where discussion was carried on with regard to the means for attaining independence for India. At these meetings the methods advocated were the education of the public by means of lectures, books and songs and the preparation for rising against the British Government by collection of arms and ammunition.

* * *

" The photograph, Exhibit A 271, to which reference has been made, marks an important stage in the history of the association. Its occasion was the impending departure of Vinayak Savarkar for England in the middle of June, 1906, a step which he was enabled to take owing to his being the recipient of a scholarship given by Shamji Krishna Varma, the founder of the India House at Highgate. Up to the time of his departure Vinayak Savarkar had been one of the most active and probably the most stimulating of the members of the Mitra Mela. In the early part of 1906 speeches were delivered by him in Poona and in Nasik, the object of which was to arouse the passion for independence and hatred for the foreign rulers of the country and to suggest how, by means of mental training and physical exercises, preparation might be made for successful revolt.

"Before the departure of Vinayak Savarkar the Mitra Mela had developed into, or given birth to, the Abhinava Bharat or Young India Society, a title which the prosecution

suggests was borrowed from the 'Young Italy' of Mazzini. Its objects were unquestionably revolutionary."

* * *

"All the witnesses, who have described the inner working of the Abhinava Bharat Society in Nasik, speak to the administration of oaths to its members. Its existence appears to have been suspected by the police, but its proceedings were kept secret so successfully that no action was taken in regard to the association till the murder of Mr. Jackson on the 21st of December 1909. There is evidence in the shape of certain documents found in the possession of the accused Kashikar shortly after the arrest of Ganesh Savarkar in 1909, which indicates that the association aimed at some sort of organization founded upon the model of revolutionary societies in Russia.

"In a search of the house of Ganesh Savarkar about the same time, a much scored copy of 'Frost's Secret Societies of the European Revolution 1776-1876' was found in which is described the secret organization of the Russian Nihilists consisting of small circles or groups affiliated into sections, each member knowing only the members of the circle to which he belonged. This may explain the existence of various small groups of young men who are found in this case to have been working for the same objects and drawing weapons from the same source without personal acquaintance with the members of other groups.

"It appears that Vinayak not content with the lives of Mazzini available in English for the instruction of his associates was, at or soon after the time of his departure for England, engaged on the preparation of a Marathi version of the autobiography of Mazzini, with an introduction summarising the political teaching of the Italian. After his arrival in England, Vinayak did not take long to complete this work. It was sent out by him to India for the purpose of publication and was issued from a Poona press through the agency of Ganesh Savarkar.

"The introduction emphasises the importance of elevating politics to the rank of religion and argues that Ramdas, the saint of the Maharashtra in the time of Shivaji, possessed the same spiritual essence as Mazzini under a different name. It points out how Mazzini relied upon the youth of the country to attain independence and then proceeds to dilate upon his twofold programme of instruction and war.

"The suggested methods of preparation for war are the purchase and storing of weapons in neighbouring countries to be used when opportunity should occur: the opening of

many very small but secret factories at some distance from one another, for the manufacture of weapons clandestinely in the country; seeking independence and the purchase by secret societies of weapons in other countries to be secretly imported in merchant ships.

"The introduction also contains a significant passage upon 'Swadeshi' agitation, by which, says, Vinayak, is meant 'the imposition of restraint upon the plundering propensities of another and the protection of one's own rights. Ordinary men do not know all at once what their rights are. Therefore all that they can comprehend at the outset is that the trade carried on by foreigners is inflicting loss upon themselves. They therefore become ready to boycott such trade. When they are ready so far, the foreigners of course begin to adopt oppressive measures for the protection of their trade. When this oppression commences, the persons who at first boycotted only the trade, quite easily have recource to the true way. They begin to perceive that it is of no use to boycott foreign cloth or tobacco or tea which are inanimate. What meaning is there in their venting their anger on these lifeless things? They must vent their real anger only on those animate things which give support to these inanimate things. Not foreign goods but foreigners themselves must be boycotted.' Much of the evidence suggests that this view of Swadeshi has been generally accepted amongst the followers of the Savakars in the Deccan during the last few years.

"Vinayak's Mazzini had a great success. All the copies of the first edition had been taken from the publisher within three months of its publication and it appears from a letter of the accused Patanker, dated 30th December 1908, addressed to Ganesh Savarkar, that the latter was at that time contemplating the issue of a new edition of 3,000 copies. That the book was used in support of inflammatory political harangues appears from the reports of the speeches of the accused No. 11, delivered in June 1907. Those speeches were delivered in advocacy of secret societies, such as those established by Mazzini in order to obtain independence, and he recommends the audience to read the life of Mazzini in Marathi written by his friend Savarkar.

"According to the confession of No. 11 his speeches synchronized with the establishment of a regular constitution for the Abhinava Bharat Society, for he says that, in April or May 1907, the first general half-yearly meeting of the Society was held at Kothura, near Nasik, and that it was followed by another meeting after six months at Sion on the outskirts of Bombay and by a third meeting in April or May 1908 at Nasik.

"We will now refer to the evidence regarding the activities of Vinayak Savarkar in Europe. That evidence consists of the depositions of a person who was, from May 1908 until February 1909, cook at the India House in Highgate, of a student of Engineering whose acquaintance with Vinayak in London commenced in October 1906, and another person who made the acquaintance of Vinayak in London towards the end of 1909: of certain letters written by Vinayak to his friends in India and of publications coming from the pen of Vinayak or found in his possession or that of his associates or tools.

"We see no reason to disbelieve of any of the London witnesses above mentioned. They testify that Vinayak was the leader of a group of ardent revolutionists at the India House. He completed while he was there a History of the Indian mutiny or as he calls it 'The Indian War of Independence' in Marathi, which was translated in English by other residents at the India House. He organized in London in May 1907, and 1908 meetings in which the anniversary of the outbreak of the mutiny was celebrated. He despatched to India the inflammatory pamphlet styled 'Oh Martyrs,' in praise of those Indians who fell on the rebel side during the mutiny and metal buttons which have been referred to in this case as mutiny buttons. He did not, however, confine his activities to writings and speeches. In August and September 1908, he was occupied with other associates at the India House in manifolding a number of typed copies of a work, dealing with the preparation of bombs and dangerous explosives suitable for anarchical outrages. Many of these were despatched by post to various places in India. Vinayak also administered oaths of the Young India Society, which he stated had branches all over the world, to two of the London witnesses.

"When the cook left London for India in 1908, Vinayak forced him to pack in his trunk a parcel containing 20 Browning automatic pistols and a number of cartridges for the same, to be delivered together with a letter to one or other of two addresses in Bombay, and when another witness left Paris for India in 1910, Vinayak tried to induce him to take a similar parcel of 25 Browning pistols and on his refusal prevailed upon him to take one pistol concealed in his trunk. It has been strenuously contended that there is no sufficient proof that Vinayak was the person who entrusted the 20 Browning pistols to the cook Chaturbhuj. On the one hand, we have the statement of the latter that the pistols were entrusted to him by Vinayak in London at the India House for delivery in Bombay to one or other of two men who have proved to have been old college friends of his.

"The pistols entrusted to Chaturbhuj reached their destination safely, as did the typed copies of the bomb manual despatched in the latter half of 1908. One of these manuals was found in the search of Ganesh Savarkar's house in the beginning of 1909.

"Vinayak Savarkar was in close touch with a small though well-known group of violent Indian Anarchists living in Paris. One of the documents, found in the possession of Chanjerirao at the time of his arrest, several copies of which had been entrusted to him when leaving Paris by Vinayak, is styled 'Bande Mataram.' It is a pamphlet in praise of Dhingra, a resident of the India House, who assassinated Sir Curzon Wyllie with a Browning pistol at a party in London in June 1909. The phamphlet strongly advocates political assassination in India and whether or not it is from the pen of Vinayak Savarkar, it at all events represents doctrines which he was anxious to disseminate in India. The following passage may be quoted as indicating its aim : 'Terrorise the officials, and the collapse of the whole machinery of oppression is not very far. The persistent execution of the policy that has been so gloriously inaugurated by Khoodiram Bose, Kanailal Dutt and other martyrs will soon cripple the British Government in India. This campaign of separate assassinations is the best conceivable method of paralysing the bureaucracy and of arousing the people. The initial stage of the revolution is marked by the policy of separate assassinations.'

"Before turning to this part of the case we will refer to two more documents ; one is a printed document, 7 copies of which were found in Vinayak's trunk when he was arrested at Victoria Station in London on the 13th March, 1910. It is styled 'Choose, Oh Indian princes' and professes to be addressed in a spirit of reasoned protest to the Maharajas of Kolhapur and Gwalior and other princes who had not appreciated the spirit of and had oppressed the members of the Abhinava Bharat. The Abhinava Bharat is here referred to as if it were an extensive organization having definite aims for the regeneration of India.

V. D. Savarkar. "In dealing generally with the question of conspiracy, so much has been said about the activities of Vinayak Savarkar, that it is unnecessary to deal separately with his case at any length. We will however refer to a document disseminated by him in India when he was the Manager at the India House. From internal evidence, it would seem that it was written on the occasion of one of the anniversaries of the Indian mutiny celebrated in London to which reference has already been made. The copy put in in this

case was found in the search of Kashiker's house early in 1909. It was originally received by another accused from Vinayak and given by him to Kashiker. It amounts to a vigorous declaration of war against the British Government. One sentence may be referred to as an illustration. 'The war began on the 10th of May 1857 is not over on the 10th of May 1908, nor can it ever cease till a 10th of May to come sees the destiny accomplished.' We find the accused guilty of the abetment of waging war by instigation, by the circulation of printed matter inciting to war, the providing of arms and the distribution of instructions for the manufacture of explosives. He is therefore guilty of an offence punishable under Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code. We also find him guilty of conspiring with others of the accused to overawe, by criminal force or show of criminal force, the Government of India and the Local Government and he is therefore guilty of an offence punishable under Section 121-A of the Indian Penal Code.

* * *

Order

" Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the sentence of the Court upon you is transportation for life and forfeiture of all your property."

APPENDIX IV

A libellous publication against the Savarkar brothers and how the *Capital* had to tender an abject apology to them for having published the same.

* * * *

While the Savarkar brothers were still rotting in the jail and all public efforts to get them released were doggedly being set at naught by the then authorities, the *Capital*, a leading Anglo-Indian Journal of Calcutta, came forward to break a lance or two in defence of the authorities. But this chivalrous attempt whether inspired or spontaneous proved a pitiable failure: for the youngest of the Savarkar brothers, Dr. Narayan D. Savarkar, immediately challenged the *Capital* people to prove their statements as published in their issue of the 26th of May 1921 and brought them to their knees.

The objectionable passage ran thus :—

" Andaman Islands have no cable commuication with the mainland of India and Burma, but wireless installation keeps Port Blair in telegraphic touch with Calcutta, Madras and Rangoon. Before the outbreak of the war one of the Savarkar brothers, the elder if I mistake not, has so ingratiated himself with the prison authorities by his good behaviour

and superior accomplishments that he was given a considerable amount of freedom and eventually put in charge of the wireless installation becoming 'Sparks' of the settlement. But the Mahratta has no love for his benefactors and was, at heart a rebel. The Germans had a well-equipped wireless station in Sumatra and as soon as the war broke out Savarkar got into communication with them and a plot was hatched for a raid on the unprotected islands. The Germans would use them as a submarine base for the destruction of the commerce of Calcutta and the capture of the oil-steamers from Rangoon. A part of the plot was the landing of a ship-load of rifles in the Sunderbans to arm the rebels in India where Savarkar's friends on the mainland undertook to rally to the flag.

* * *

" America was not in the war at that time and was ready to sell no end of war-material to any belligrerent. The Germans chartered two fast steamers in the U. S. A. filled one with rifles and ammunition, and the other with six submarines in sections. Fortunately for us the plot miscarried before the clippers arrived in Indian waters. Somebody in India turned informer and gave the show away to the Government of India which acted with promptitude and decision. The Somersets embarked from Madras on the *Avankola* whose captain sailed with sealed orders on opening which he found that his destination was Port Blair. Three gunboats steamed quietly into the harbour and anchord off Ross Island. The inhabitants of the settlement were mystified and when they learned the true inwardness of things, became full of their own importance and swanked no end. Some gentle pressure was applied to the Dutch to dismantle the German wireless station at Sumatra and Savarkar found his self in durance 'vile,' the horror instead of the pet of the local authorities.

* * * *

" I heard different stories of the steamers which the Germans had chased. The one containing the submarines was chased into a Dutch port, but the other, he said, eluded her fleet and landed her cargo of rifles and ammunition somewhere in the Sunderabans. This statement has been emphatically denied by the Military and Police of Calcutta ; but many of us remember a memorable Sunday when every launch on the river was commandeered for a military expedition to the sandheads. I have never been able to ascertain what for.

* * * *

"A delicious story in this small Chapter of the History of the War is told of the Press Censor at Port Blair. He was a halfway officer who came from Simla where he had great influence. When the Somersets arrived, it was found that

there was no money in the local Treasury to pay them. "Telegraph to Calcutta for a lakh of rupees" said the Chief Commissioner to the Press Censor. The latter wirelessed and the message was picked up by the *Emden* which was cruising in the Bay *seeking she might* devour some bright genius in Calcutta, then wirelessed to Port Bair that the lakh of rupees was being sent by the tramp steamer *Lovat.* The German cruiser picked up that message also and lay in wait. The *Lovat* was duly held up, her treasure appropriated, and she was then ignobly sent to the bottom. What a bunch of romance could be written from these materials which I have set before my readers to conceive them that the Government of Inida are by no means unreasonable in refusing to release the Savarkar brothers, who, Mr. Gandhi himself confesses, are frank revolutionaries."—*Ditcher's Diary, Capital.*

Mr. Savarkar's solicitors, the well-known Messrs. Manilal and Kher of Bombay, were instructed to serve a notice calling upon the editor, the proprietors and the publishers of the *Capital* to disclose the name of the writer and to tender an unconditional apology for the defamatory statements. They also assured the *Capital* that the Savarkar brothers had no desire to be vindictive and if the statement be publicly withdrawn they would refrain from further action.

After resorting to a lot of evasive expressions and even a bit of bluff the *Capital* was awed down and published the following apology in its issue of the 28th July, 1921.

"The Editor and the Publisher of the *Capital* deeply regret having published the defamatory remarks, which appeared in 'The Ditcher's Diary' in the issue of the *Capital*, dated 26th May 1921 and hereby tender him an unconditional apology."

"The Editor and the Publisher withdraw the remarks made in respect of both the Savarkar brothers and deeply regret that they should have been published, however, innocently."

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